1861 Mexico 1961

Independent

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

Founder of Independent

Henry Humphries 1833-1924

First Editorial: March 21, 1861

INTRODUCTORY

On our first appearance in this country as public journalist, it is fit that we give ourselves a proper introduction, by briefly stating our object and purposes, hereafter. Our object is to establish in this village what has so long been wanted, to place it on an equal footing with other thriving villages in the State:--a public press and local newspaper, devoted to the interests and welfare of this place and adjacent towns. We intend to relieve the citizens of Mexico of their dependence on other places for their printing, and their family newspaper by furnishing them facilities for having the one done, and by supplying them with the other, at home.

We design to furnish our patrons with a general newspaper that can be with truth called a family one. The "Independent" will be devoted to the best interests of this community, and we shall sustain and advocate all such measures as may tend to promote the prosperity of this village and its citizens generally. Our leaders will find in its columns a large amount of choice miscellaneous reading, together with all the latest general intelligence of the day, and such local matters and items as may be of importance, and a faithful record of all important transactions and events both here and elsewhere.

In politics, we shall be independent of all party organizations; free to uphold and defend the right, and free to oppose the wrong. While thus reserving to ourselves the right to comment on any political question, we believe we shall best subserve the interests of this community by devoting less attention to politics and more to local matters.

We intend to make the "Independent" purely a family paper, and in order to do so, we present it to the public in its present attractive form, which we consider the best we could adopt. It will embrace in its columns matter that will be amusing and instructive to all classes, as well as the man in business, the farmer, and mechanic, as the family circle.

We are fully aware, that in starting a weekly paper in this village, we run considerable risk of meeting with pecuniary loss; but having received strong assurance of support from many of your leading citizens, we have ventured to risk our little all--and await patiently a recompense for our services.

In trusting to the magnanimity and generosity of the citizens of Mexico and vicinity, we hope we have not counted in vain. Without your cooperation, we cannot succeed; with it, we shall, as we believe, be enabled to establish the "Independent" on a solid basis.

We come among you desirous of becoming identified with the interests of the place, and to advocate what will benefit you locally. The press has its influence for good or evil; and as we believe what little our paper may exert will be for the good of this community.

THE INDEPENDENT BEGINS

HENRY HUMPHRIES

Picture a small man, not over five feet tall, as he sits at the compositor's stool and "sticks" type for the first issue of a weekly paper in a town that he barely knew. What thoughts must have gone through the young fellow's mind as he gazed occasionally out the upstairs window of the Webb block over Peck and Conklin's store (at present the site of Tompkin's Hardware and the first home of the Independent)? Could he expect support from the Stone and Tuller Hardware store on the corner diagonally across the street? Would the post office on the corner (where the Circle Supply is now located) have orders for subscriptions enough to keep the paper going? Would there be enough income to pay the rent? In the midst of the crisis developing and which soon erupted into the Civil War, there must have been reason enough to worry about the success of such a venture as a small town weekly newspaper.

The only earnest of support he had were a few names on a slip of paper that had been circulated at a town meeting one night several weeks previously. (The local citizenry had been asked to sign if they were willing to subscribe to a weekly paper.) and the verbal statements of some businessmen that they would advertise.

Before him was a case of type, somewhat battered in shipment here from Utica. Out of it he must set by hand the four-column, eight page paper he proposed for his project. Behind him was a somewhat antiquated hand press that took two men to operate. From these and what little other equipment they possessed, received in lieu of wages from a former employer, Henry Humphries and James Scarrit produced the first edition of a shaky Mexico Independent.

There was no long list of subscribers. No one wanted to venture more than twenty-five cents for a quarter of a year's subscription. A previous experience with "The Messenger" a paper published by Thomas Messenger in 1839 and which did not last out the year, made the investment of a whole dollar in a questionable enterprise too risky for chary Mexicans. Predictions of quick failure were rampant among the "sages" of the village, but Messrs. Humphries and Scarrit were determined; they struggled through edition after edition until they had completed the first year. Little did the two young printers know then that they were fashioning the foundation for a monument to a dedicated, religious, and preserving man. That humble beginning has grown through one hundred years, until this present Centennial edition gives substance to a young man's faith and foresight.

First Issue Of Independent Was Hectic

Reprinted from the first issue of the Independent on March 21, 1861.

In getting out the first number of a new paper, the printer has very many difficulties to contend with; in fact, only those conversant with the newspaper business have any idea of the extent of such difficulties. The obstacles we have had to encounter in issuing this number have been neither few nor small. Our printing material, before it reached Mexico, received some rather rough usage, and some of the type was not only knocked into "pi" but badly battered. Then, too, our office, instead of being like a printer's chapel, where silence and order prevail, has been the center of attraction, especially by the juvenile portion of the community, who, at times, have been a little too "nosey." And on Saturday, while printing off the first side, if our office had been a soup kitchen, we question if we should have had many more visitors. We trust, therefore, that our readers will overlook all defects in this number; we hope soon to have our office arrangements perfected, when we shall be able to make the Independent more entertaining and instructive.

August 27, 1874:—

Building the new bridge across Salmon Creek near Toronto Mills, will begin next Monday. (Completed Sept. 24, 1874).

March 12, 1874:—

Six or seven street lamps have been received from Boston. Some of them are already up. They are of superior make, burn naptha and give a brilliant light.

EARLY MEXICO INDUSTRY

MILLER FACTORY

Home of the Miller Spring Wagon, a famous product of one of Mexico's early industries.

Mr. Miller purchased the above building which was a part of the Academy in 1855 and moved it to a point just west of Black Creek. Here he manufactured the wagon bearing his name. An Independent story stated: "...we would state that Mr. Miller has a splendid assortment of carriages, buggies, and other vehicles, made in the very best style and of the best materials."

A Miller wagon was used to transport the soldiers' Monument from the railroad to the cemetery.

This building was formerly the Academy but was moved to its site on the west bank of Black Creek.

Henry Humphries Home in Mexico

House on Church Street occupied for many years by Mr. and Mrs. Humphries. The house previously housed a female seminary. The lot was deeded to the village to be used as a playground but was never put to that purpose. The house was razed and the lot sold to Hoyt F. Hollister.

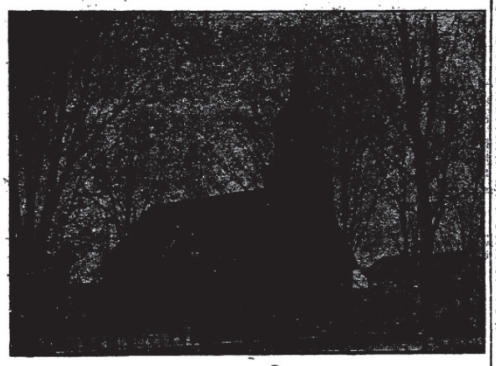
Not Going To Run Away Just Yet

MARCH 28, 1861

We understand that a number of persons believe that, after receiving subscriptions for the Independent, we shall leave Mexico on some pleasant moonlight night, and take the big press with us, together with all the other office material. Now, we beg to state, for the information of all such persons, copies of the Independent to that it would be rather difficult for us to run off in the night with such a burden, and it is not likely any effort of the kind will be made just yet, for we have too much to lose by such an operation. If we have health and strength given us, we shall stay in Mexico at least a year--we hope many years---and it is our intention to give fifty-two copies of the Independent to every man who pays us a dollar. But if there by any who still doubt our word, and think we shall suddenly leave Mexico, after having pocketed their dimes, we would advise them to station themselves near our office, every night, for a few months, with loaded rifles, in order to guard the office, and prevent our cheating them out of their dues.

MEXICO CHURCHES

Baptist Church



View looking north to Baptist church. Picture taken about 1900.

Baptist Church Still Stands On Original Site

A great deal of the history of the Mexico Baptist church must remain a mystery because in 1864 the great fire which destroyed much of the business section of town also destroyed the old church records.

The local Baptist Society was organized on January 24, 1832, "through the instrumentality and under the pastoral care of Rev. Jonathan Goodwin" to quote from a preface to the new church records written by the clerk in 1865. Mr. Goodwin had been a pastor in Connecticut before coming to Mexico and preached in this vicinity for three years before the organization of the local society He remained its pastor for three more years.

Original Church

The first services were held in the Masonic Hall while the members were preparing to built a meeting house. A site was purchased from Nathaniel and Cynthia Butler at a cost of $75, as shown by a deed dated June 13, 1832. That summer the meeting house was built, part of that original structure being included in the present building. This church was lower than the present, and had a piazza in front and had no steeple.

In 1835 this church then known as the Mexicoville church united with another in the northwest part of the town under the leadership of Rev. Davidson with a membership of 115. There had been 56 charter members. (There is no record of the northwest group).

Early Difficulties

The church in 1839 is said to have "passed through some trials and afflctions and was compelled to exclude a number." 1852 was "a time of great darkness and despondency." From 1852 to 1855 the people were "destitute of any regular pastor and but seldom enjoyed the ordnances of God's house." Occassionally Elder P. Witt Hitchcock presented a sermon.

In the summer of 1857 the Rev. Judson Davis was preaching half the time in Mexicoville and the other half in Colosse. The next year he was with the Mexico group full time. During his pastorate thirty-two new members were added and the interior repaired and remodeled.

In 1872 a legacy from Sister Ingham's estate was available for repairs and construction of a new church with the repairs being decided upon.

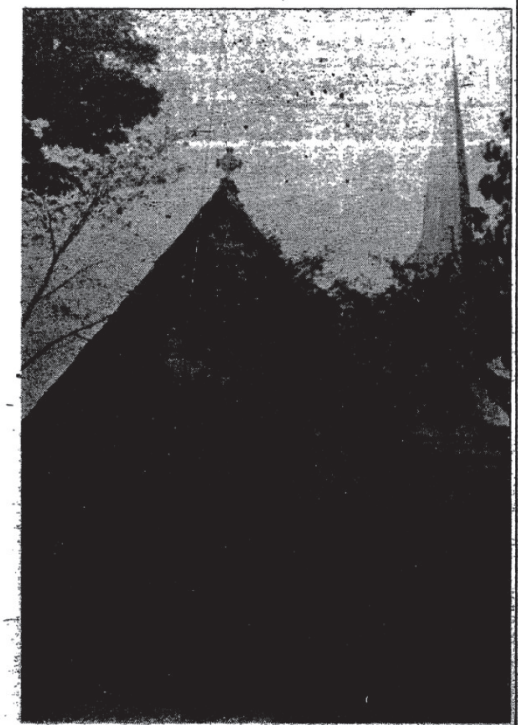
Complete Remodeling

From the Independent of Jan. 16, 1873 the following account is taken:

"The church building has been extended towards the street, a vestibule now occupying the place of the old piazza. Its height has been increased by a new roof considerably taller than the old one, and this surmounted with a steeple.

(Continued on next page)

Episcopal Church



Grace Church in Gothic Design was dedicated June 16, 1871.

Local Church Linked With Deaf

Thursday, March 12, 1874:—

Grace Church Parish was organized some twenty years since, but owing to the paucity of numbers as to Churchmen, the parish was not admitted to representation in convention until June, 1869. The first regular services were held Dec. 1869 in a hall (Mayo Hall, part of Mexico Hotel, and later in a building where the Bank now stands) obtained for the purpose, where they were continued for a year. It having been decided to build a church edifice, a suitable and admirably located lot for the purpose was secured, and the corner stone was laid by Bishop Huntington, June 22, 1870. The Church of Grace was opened for divine services June 16, 1871, less than twelve months after the laying of the corner-stone.

The church, built upon a twelfth century plan, is of bluish gray stone from a quarry near the village. It will seat 400 persons.

The chancel window in its upper part, consists of three circular divisions, in the uppermost of which appears the descending Dove, emblem of the Holy Spirit; in the others is represented the Paten, in the midst of sheaves of wheat, and Cup surrounded by grapes, illustrative of the bread and wine of Holy Communion. Beneath these, the window is again divided into three of lancet form, in the central and upper part of which division is shown the Cross and Crown, immediately beneath is a full length and nearly life-size picture of the Savior, in the act of healing the dumb man, who kneels before Him, touching with his fingers his tongue. (Mark VIII, 31). In the division to the right of these two figures is the Passion Flower, the blood red Cross, and beneath, the Chi Rho, a combination of Greek letters, signifying Christ and the Cross, the symbol which gave character to the banner of Constantine, and of popular use among the early Christians; to the left, the Lily, emblem of innocence and purity, beneath which appears the letters, I. H. S. and under these those of the Alpha and Omega.

Memorial Windows

The central window, on the north side of the nave, is in memory of the two deceased children of Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Conklin. The Pelican and her young, emblematic of maternal love, as also of the Mother Church,—the legend in connection with which is so beautiful and familiar; and the Lamb bearing the banner, are devices illuminating the upper portion. The principal figure to the left represents Christ as the Good Shepherd, with the Lamb upon His shoulder, and the companion piece on the right, a beautiful female figure full length, bearing in her arms a little child. Beneath these appear the names of the children, with the words, "And there shall be no night there," suggested at the request of one of the children, whose last words were, "Mother, read the chapter about there being no night there." On the south side of the church and opposite, is a window in memorium of W. A. Loomis, placed by Mrs. W. A. Loomis. The Crown, "reward of the faithful," the Book, "the lamp of the faithful;" and beneath these, to the right, a hand grasping the Cross, "Simply to Thy Cross I Cling;" and on the left the helmet, sword and shield srve to give an idea of the character of him whose memory a loving heart has thus made effort to perpetuate. Under all is the inscription, "Put on the Whole Armor of God." The oriel, over the main entrance, the Trinity window, contains the Trefoil, the Hebrew characters for Jehovah, in the upper disc, and in the other, the Lamb upon the Book, and the descending Dove, and was placed by the friends of Mrs. George D. Babcock, of Mexico. The chancel window is in memoriam of John W. Chandler, their first and most worthy president, presented by the Empire State Deaf-Mute Association.

The window arrived on Friday afternoon, was placed in its position on Saturday, and the day following being the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity, the Rev. Dr. Gallaudet, General Manager of Church Mission to Deaf Mutes, happening in his rounds to be here, preached,—the Gospel for that day, Mark VII, 31, having, in the regular course of services, been read.

Gifts to the Church

The Communion Table, Bishop's Chair and Credence Bracket were presented by a class of young ladies of the Sunday School of Christ Church, Oswego; the Pulpit, Desk, and Rector's Chair, by Miss Kate Johnson and friends of Trinity Church, Hartford, Conn.; the Font and Lectern by the Sunday School of the parish; the Vail for the Lord's Table, by Miss Anna French and friends of Grace Church, Utica; and the Cross by the Rector. The chancel furniture is of black walnut, very chaste and beautiful. Besides the furniture, are other gifts: Memorial Bell, by L. H. Conklin; Communion Plate, by Henry T. Chandler, of New York; Bible and Prayer Book, by Jonathan Jones of St. Mark's Church, Williamsburg; set of white silk book-marks, by Mrs. Farnum of Washington, D. C.; and another set by Miss Amy Pruyne of Mexico.

There are costlier edifices, doubtless, but I question much if there are many to be found so complete and satisfying, as regards beauty of architectural design and finish throughout, as this Church of Grace, Mexico. As a stranger, I bear witness to the comfort it affords, and to the brotherly kindness of its parishoners. Its crowning beauty is that it is free, where rich and poor alike may worship and listen to the Gospel of glad tidings.

A handsome organ now being built by Messrs. Steer and Turner, of Westfield, Massachusetts, who have the reputation for building organs of remarkable sweetness and fullness of tone, will be in place and in all respects ready for use upon Easter day.

Later Improvements

Some of the improvements of the later years include a new slate roof, heating plant, wiring throughout and interior decorating, the repair and electrifying of the original organ. Modifications include dividing a part of the nave into two church schools. The new carpet was given by the Woman's Auxiliary (including a $50 memorial gift). Much of this was made possible by donations and volunteer labor.

Love for the church has been shown by many memorial gifts. One of the earliest was the Book of Common Prayer, used on the Litany Desk given by Mrs. Rose Preman in memory of her son Whilliam H. Preman (1903); choir hymnals in memory of Mrs. Eugene H. Chase by Mrs. Frank Evans Badger; organ light in memory of Robert Roderick by Mrs. H. J. Hoyt; twelve kneeling hassocks in memory of Mrs. Bertha

(Continued next page)

'Watch The Birdie
And Smile Please'

This was the way in 1900

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- Photo Service
- Film
- Enlargements

MURPHY PHOTO SERVICE

YOUR KODAK DEALER

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Mexico WO 3-7224

Horning by the Woman's Auxiliary; the dossal in memory of Mrs. Frederick Kime by Mrs. Frank Evans Badger; Processional Cross in memory of Frank D. McKee by Mrs. McKee and family; the altar cross, Eucharistic candlesticks and candelbra given in memory of: Mrs. Almeda Barker by Dr. William A. Barker; Mrs. Sarah Barnard by Dr. and Mrs. W. A. Burgess; Mrs. Frederick Kime, Mrs. Eugene H. Chase, Mrs. Charles Biederman, Mrs. Frank Evans Badger, and Miss Alice Broune by Mrs. Horace Blose; William H. Broune by W. Stanley Broune; Mrs. Frank Evans Badger by Mrs. Paul R. Campbell; Mr. and Mrs. Silas Horning by Richard Horning; Rober Alton Cronk, by Mr. and Mrs. Leon W. Ellis and Horace H. Hoyt; H. J. Hoyt by Miss Laura Jean Hoyt; H. J. Hoyt by Mrs. Clarence Johnson by Mrs. Edith Johnson; Daniel Thompson by Mrs. Margaret Loomis and Mrs. Marjorie T. Varley; Mrs. Ernest Dunlure by Harry Mills and Mrs. Allen Vaughn; Ruth Oxner by Ross Oxner; Mr. and Mrs. Mose Preman and Earl Preman by Mrs. Carl Shaad and Mr. and Mrs. William Preman; Miss Gertrude Preman by Mr. and Mrs. William Preman; Fred B. Mrs. Frank Evans Badger by Mr. and Mrs. Carlton O. Tripp; Mrs. Grace Gardiner by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Putnam; a cash gift by the Woman's Auxiliary in memory of their deceased members and choir hymnals in memory of the Rev. and Mrs. Frank E. Badger.

Two years ago St. Margaret's Guild was organized and through their efforts, the altar linens, the acolytexs' robes, the kitchen equipment have been purchased.

Vestrymen are: Harrison B. Southworh, Dr. A. W. Burgess, Dr. John Burgess, Karl W. Gibbs, Richard Horning, William Preman, Richard Widell, and Laurence Richardson. Rear Admiral (Ret.) Harrison B. Southworth is at present serving on the Standing Committee for the Diocese.

Miss Cecile Buck is the church organist.

The church school is under the supervision of Mrs. Frank D. McKee. Woman's Auxiliary president is Mrs. H. B. Southworth. Mrs. H. J. Hoyt served as president for eight years.

St. Margaret's Guild's first president was Mrs. John Burgess. Mrs. Robert Roach is now serving.

The rectors following the Rev. Albert Hoag are: M. Howard St. Cyr and the Rev. Arthur Harrington, present rector.

Grace Church has contributed to civic and educational projects including services held for the deaf mutes of the community conducted by the Diocesan Missionary for these people.

Services and church school are held at 9:30 a. m.

BAPTIST CHURCH CONT.

The windows are new and of stained glass. Each of these has at the top its own appropriate design. That in the orchestra is called the Singers' window and the emblem it bears is a harp. On one side two are called church windows and are marked, one with a cross, the other with an anchor. The third, nearest the pulpit has upon it a Bible, and at the bottom the words "Our Bible School." On the other side are the Society window, bearing a sheaf; the Sunday-school window, a dove; the Juvenile class window, a lamb.

Window Stories

Each of these has its history. For their window the children saved their pennies, their teacher helped, and they had a present of ten dollars. The Sunday school gave its funds to that appropriated to it, while three of the others were gifts from ladies who preferred not to have their names mentioned lest they should receive credit above those whose contributions were chiefly in work not less helpful. In this work the ladies have done nobly; they have been courageous, self-denying, unwearied, overcoming obstacles which seemed almost insurmountable, and not less to their efforts than to those of the men is the society indebted for the beautiful structure in which its meetings will henceforth be held. In addition to many other things accomplished, they have carpeted the church and cushioned its seats. The chandiliers were the gift of Mrs. Orsamus Smith and her mother.

"The walls are frescoed with much taste and skill, chiefly in pannels, the work of Mr. Frank Carpenter of this village. Above the pulpit in beautiful letters, appear the words, "The Lord is in His Holy Temple;" over the orchestra, "Enter into His Gates with Thanksgiving." The elegant pulpit and furniture were given wholly, or in part, by the Rev. I. Butterfield's church in Oswego.

No Debt

The work has been planned and superintended entirely we believe, by Mr. George W. Baker, who, with great energy and zeal, and at considerable sacrifice, has devoted himself to it, and who has shown excellent taste and executive ability in bringing it to so happy a conclusion."

The entire program of remodeling cost over $3,300. A $1.000 deficit was subscribed to during the day of the dedication.

The trustees stated, "not one dollar of the sum pledged was ever designed for a bell, and further, that not a solitary dollar of it will ever be used to purchase a bell for themselves or for any one else."

A new chapel has been built on the rear of the church with class rooms on the second floor for the use of the Bible School. A gift of $200 from Sister Loomis in 1903 was applied on the purchase of new pews for the auditorium.

The Centennial of the organization of the church was celebrated in 1932.

The Rev. Clyde Russell is the present pastor, residing in the newly remodeled parsonage.

First site of Methodist Church, Brick building built in 1833 and burned in 1850. Parsonage in background, now a part of Miss Fanny Thomas House.

METHODIST CHURCH

It was in the early days of 1808 that a young Methodist preacher named Jonathan Huestis made his appearance mounted on his horse with saddlebags containing his wardrobe, Bible and hymn book. He had the assurance that God had called him to preach the gospel and was in quest of an audience.

Learning that a Methodist woman was living in this vicinity, he called and was kindly received in the home of Mrs. Leonard Ames. From that time on the Ames home became the headquarters of the society.

The Cayuga district which was a part of the Genesse Conference was organized in 1810. It contained two circuits, Black River and Mexico. Mexico circuit extended from Redfield and Camden to the Oswego River. In 1811 Ira Fairbanks was appointed to the Mexico circuit. He received $25 for his services and reported that he left the circuit out of debt.

In 1820, a two story brick schoolhouse was erected on the ground so long occupied by Mexico Academy, which became a meeting place for the Presbyterians and Methodists who used it alternately as a house of worship. In 1826 Orson Ames offered his tannery to the Methodists for their meeting place.

Brick Church

In 1833, the brick church, the first church home, was built. It stood on Main street approximately where the Fannie Thomas residence now is. A little later a parsonage was built near the church.

On a Sunday afternoon of 1850, the brick church and parsonage were destroyed. After the fire the society worshiped in the Town Hall, which occupied a portion (second floor) of the site of the Corner Store. A new site was purchased from

(Continued on next page)

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Perhaps your memory of the pot-bellied stove and the open cracker barrel of the store your dad used to take you to, is dim. But the memory of the friendliness and courtesy that was part of it will never fade from the mind.

Fabulous changes have occured since then. The miracles of the 20th Century have piled one on another. The old fashioned pot bellied stove has been replaced by myriads of comforts for the customers convenience. Factory wrapped packages bring us crackers that are ever fresh and crisp. But one thing has not changed. It is the old fashioned friendliness and courtesy that you will always find here.

OUR 39th IGA YEAR

SACHEL'S SUPER MARKET

TOP QUALITY WESTERN STEER BEEF
FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES — COLD BEER
W. Main St., Mexico
WO 3-7053

METHODIST CHURCH ABOUT 1907

METHODIST CHURCH CONT. Benjamin Stone for $1100 and a new church, the present structure, was built.

In 1856 a melodian was brought into the church against the advice of many older members. In 1876 the present organ was installed by the efforts of Lewis Miller and the choir. The organ was brought up to date in 1934 by the addition of new parts.

Organizations

Among the numerous activities of the church have been the Sunday School, the earliest record of which goes back to 1832; the Laides' Aid Society, the Foreign Missionary Society organized in 1887; the Home Missionary Society organized in 1891; the Christian Endeavor Society, later becoming the Epworth League and still later the Youth Fellowship, formed in 1887; the Young People's Missionary Societies, at one time inclhding the Senior Queen Esthers, the Queen Esther Standard Bearers and the Willing Helpers.

Women's Societies

In 1940 a new society, called the Women's Society of Christian Service was organized to take the place of the Ladies' Aid, the Foreign and Home Missionary Societies. Plans for this organization were presented by the Rev. Harold Barnard and 149 ladies became charter members. The general society was divided into five units, the Minerva Ames Unit, Jessie Kellogg Unit, Mae Ramsey Unit, and Mary Martha Unit still exist.

The Sunday School is divided into the Nursery Department, Kindergarten department, Primary Department, Junior Department, Youth Fellowship and Live Wires-an adult class still taught by Sherman Kennedy.

While the Rev. E. J. Caldwell was pastor in 1926, a new $15,000 chapel was built on the north and east side of the church. The old chapel was torn down and the new one was constructed with a dining room, kitchen and two cloak rooms on the lower floor. The dining room was so constructed as to be used for basketball and volley ball. The second floor contained class rooms and chapel.

The horse barns that were located on the church property were torn down in July, 1937 and sold to the highest bidder for $21.50

150th Celebration

In preparation for the Sesqi-Centennial celebration of the church in 1958, plans were underway in 1956 for a complete remodeling of the church, the annex, and the organ. The organ was completely rebuilt and chimes were installed. The front of the sanctuary was completely changed and new pulpit, furniture, carpet, and chair pews for both Junior and Senior choirs were added.

A new heating system was installed and the pastor's study remodeled. The sanctuary was re-opened and dedicated on November 3, 1957 with District Superintendent Robert Jones delivering the sermon.

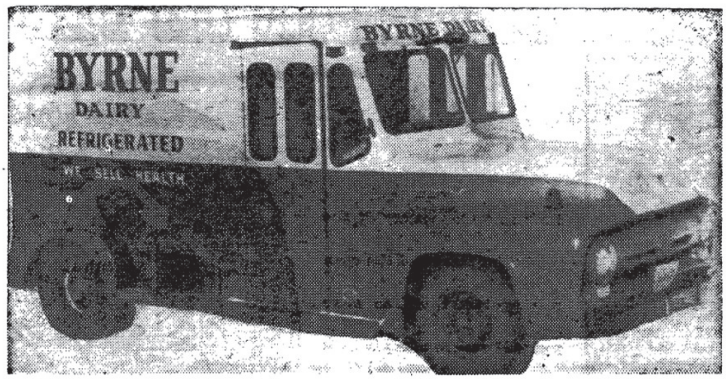
The 150th year of the church was celebrated on October 3, 4, 5, 1958 during the pastorate of the Rev. Robert E. Pennock. A homecoming banquet was a feature of the Friday night program with Saturday set aside for historical exhibits, pageant, and sacred music. Bishop W. Earl Ledden of Syracuse preached the memorial service Sunday morning. After the Bishop's reception in the afternoon, a copy of the Sesquicentennial book, church records, and other pertinent data were placed in a new corner stone.

Committees

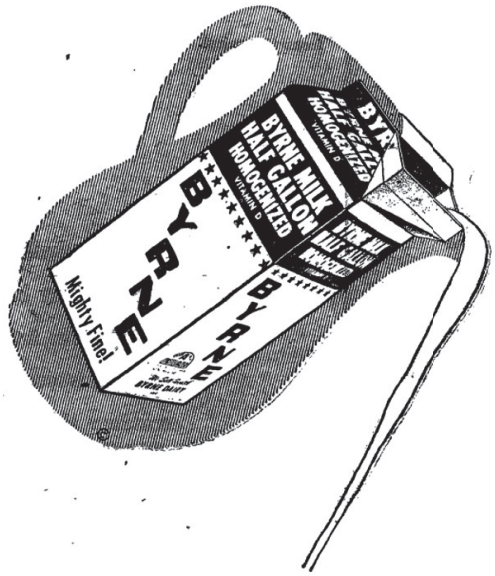
Those people primarily responsible for the completion of the building program for the celebration were: B. Olin Backus, Robert E. Brown, Donald L. Buck, Mrs. Hoyt Hollister, F. Hoyt Hollister, Charles T. Hurlbut, George N. Kellogg, Sherman W. Kennedy, Leroy M. Miner, Mrs. Leroy Miner, S. J. Ramsey, and Mrs Augusta Tubbs.

The general committee for the celebration program consisted of the Rev. Robert E. Pennock, Mrs. F. Hoyt Hollister, Elvin H. Pierce, Robert E. Brown, Mrs. Augusta Tubbs, Mrs. P. George Harvey, Clifford Pasquale, William Hagen, George Kellogg, and Spencer J. Ramsey.

Roman Catholic Church after rebuilding following fire which destroyed the 1917 building, The present building was completed in 1939, one year after its destruction. (story on next page).



You Never
Outgrow Your
Need For Milk



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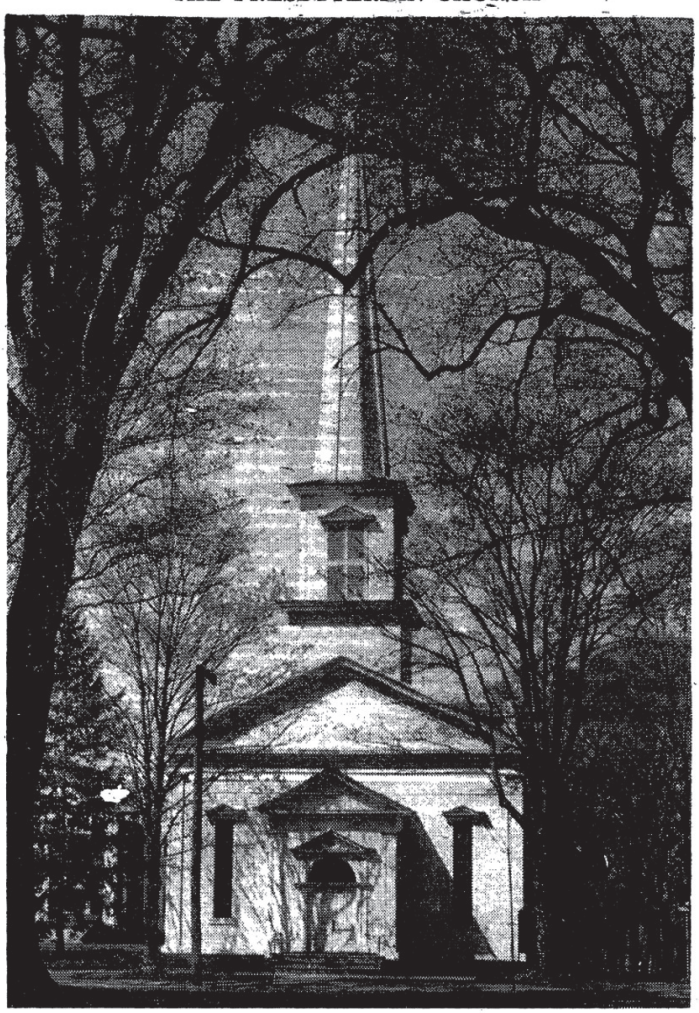
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Seven Women Begin Presbyterian Society

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

On August 27, 1810, seven women with fresh memories of New England's white churches and their tall spires facing village greens, met in a barn on Shubal Alfred's farm to form a religious society under the leadership of the Rev. Simon Waterman, a missionary sent out by the Connecticut Society. These seven mothers of the church were: Mrs. Shubal Alfred, Mrs. Alexander Beebe, Mrs. Thomas Hosmer, Mrs. Levi Matthews, Mrs. Josiah Southworth, Mrs. Thomas Wheeler and Mrs. David Williams.

For a year after this first meeting was held, no real organization could be formed because church discipline allowed no woman to hold office. Firally in 1811, enough husbands or sons or friends could become officers and the organization of the Presbyterian Church was completed. Stained glass windows on the north side of the church memorialize the contributions of the founding women.

Sunday School

The Sunday School of the church has been of particular interest to the church members. The first school may have been inspired by one organized on Prattville Hill in 1814 by Amanda Brewster or by the Sunday School organized by Almeda Southworth and Maria Perking in the Mill School House.

"In the early days the habits of Sunday worship related the Sunday School with a social hour. The people met for morning worship an hour and a half before noon and for the second service of worship in mid-afternoon. Between these came the session of the Sunday School. After morning worship was over, and before Sunday School convened, the people met socially, eating the afternoon meal which had been brought from home.

"In 1840 the School was under the direction of the strong personality of the "merchant prince" of Mexico, Peter Chandler. He is the first superintendent of whom we have knowledge.

"About 1861, a young Englishman, Henry Humphries by name began work with the "Infant Class." In the year 1867 (?) Mr. Humphries was elected superintendent of the Sunday School. Under his touch the School sprang to new life.

"The erection of the Wilcox House in 1926 was the greatest single project in relation to the Sunday School during the past half-century. The Stone room also rates special note. Classes from all age groups through Senior High School have remained intact throughout the years. Stephen T. Stanton, District Principal of Mexico Academy and Central School has regularly taught a Sunday School class regularly since August 1928, thirty-two years!"

Two of the most active classes of the church school are the Mizpah and Open Door

(Continued on next page)

CATHOLIC CHURCH

The first Mass said within the village of Mexico was in the parlor of Patrick Mahar's home on Railroad street (now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Brown) about the year 1905. Mr. Mahar constructed an altar which was moved into the room when services wede to be held.

From the Mahar home the congregation moved to a room over Mr. Taylor's drug store (Shumway Pharmacy) where Father Provost had leased and furnished a place for worship. There Mass was celebrated regularly in what was known as St. Anthony's chapel.

The next move took the communicants to Town Hall where church services were held for a few years. Following this the group moved to rooms over Jerome Baker's (now the plumbing shop of George Tollerton and Son). These rooms were occupied while the new church building was being erected, during the pastorate of the Rev. W. H. McCormick.

Church Built

The corner stone for the new church was laid in 1916 and through 1917 construction went forward with dedication in 1917. Built in semi-gothic design of red brick, the church was erected by Julian Vault. More then 1,550 people witnessed the laying of the corner stone of the building on Sunday, July 30, 1916. The church was built entirely from funds raised by parishoners and culminated the work of many years. The ritual was read by the Rt. Rev. John Grimes, Bishop of Syracuse. Speaker of the day was the Rev. T. F. Howard of St. Paul's church of Oswego. At the exercises the Sacrament of Confirmation was administered to a class of 90 children and adults in the chapel.

Father McCormick was pastor of the chhrch which was occupied in the spring of 1917 on a site purchased from Mrs. Mattie Baker.

Destroyed by Fire

An item from the Independent of March 17, 1938 tells of a serious set-back for the parishioners:

"Rebuilding plans for St. Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic church, destroyed by flames of mysterious origin shortly after midnight last Wednesday, are insurance adjustments are made this week. It is expected that a new church will be erected on the present site.

"Sunday masses were said in the rectory and will be held in the church gymnasium at the rear of the rectory next Sunday. Officials reported that most of the sacred articles were removed from the burning church Wednesday night and that the partially destroyed altar will be repaired and moved to the gymnasium within a few days. Only sacred articles not saved were the vestments.

"A statement by Corporal Howard Picard of the state police BCI Monday said that the fire was 'inadvertently set from a spark or lighted ember that set fire to a supply of charcoal that was underneath a fireproof steel cabinet on the floor of the altar boys' room.' Father Quirk conducted a Lenten service in the church last Wednesday night, during which an incense pot and candles were used.

Articles Saved

"Much credit for saving the valuable sacred articles from the chapel of the church and surrounding buildings goes to Dr. Carl Worboys and Mrs. Clifford Ruth, night telephone operator. Dr. Worboys was returning from a late call shortly after midnight, and discovered smoke pouring from the northwest corner of the church. Calling Mrs. Ruth, Dr. Worboys told her of the fire and that prompt action was needed if the building were to be saved. Immediately Mrs. Ruth called the pastors of the churches and the janitor of the Town Hall and asked them to ring their bells. She then telephoned as many firemen as could be reached by wire. (The regular alarm system had not yet been restored following the fire in the Fire Hall.)

"Due to the effort of Rev. Harold Barnard and Herman Gaebler, George Pabst and Jack Connolly, most of the church furnishings were saved."

The church was rebuilt the following year by the Mexico Lumber and Coal Co.

The Rectory

The old rectory was the former Woodruff home and was purchased during Father Farrells time. The present rectory was purchased from Dr. Charles Pike. This is the house that at one time was a part of the Leonard house when that building formed a part of the old Military Academy. The place was purchased during Father Slowey's tenure.

Dr. John Riley, a well-known surgeon of Oklahoma, presented a new altar to the church in 1953. In 1955 the entire interior of the church was redecorated.

The following priests have served since the church was dedicated: W. H. McCormick, James Farrell, John O'Brien, Charles O'Farrell, M. J. Lawler, John M. Quirk, John Tierney, Paul Long (Father Long died while serving the Mexico parish on Dec. 17, 1950). The Rev. James P. Slowey came here after Father Long's death and is still serving.

Little France

"Just one hundred years ago (Sept. 5, 1937) a priest from Syracuse said Mass in the barn of Francis Xavier Piquet at Little France. Previous to this the German and French Catholic settlers of West Monroe and Hastings would gather together on Sunday morning at the various farm houses to offer up prayers and to recite the prayers of the Mass. In 1837 they sought the services of a priest. Mass being said for the first time that year. Frequently a priest would visit the settlement and there would offer up the Sacrifice of the Mass in the various farm houses until 1885 when a church was erected for divine services. The parish was served by the Franciscan Fathers from the Church of the Assumption, Syracuse from 1855-1890 when it was then placed in charge of Father Mertens of St. Mary's, Cleveland, N. Y. In 1914 the parish was given in charge of Father McCormick, who had but recently been named the first pastor of the newly formed parish of St. Mary's Star of the Sea Church, Mexico. From 1914 to the present day St. Francis' church has been attached to Mexico as a mission church.

"Many descendants of the original settlers still live in the vicinity of Little France, French Street, Colosse and Mexico. The church records show such names as the Cottet family, the Piquets, Pattel, Bensanson, Tackley, Fischers, Mohats, Laurent, Harris"

Expressing Sentiments—1900

And In 1961

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Say 'Thank You' With A Lovely Gift Of Fresh Flowers

Next time you want to express your appreciation, let us arrange a beautiful bouquet of fresh flowers to go along with your message. We deliver free of charge just call.

MEXICO FLOWER SHOPPE

Main St.

Mexico WO 3-7879

View of Presbyterian Church before the addition of Wilcox Building in 1927.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CONT.

Class. The first was formed in 1923 and the other by Mrs. Ella Baker about 1910.

Wilcox House

The building of the Wilcox Memorial House originated with Dr. John Young, pastor of the church in 1926. The idea of a parish house was presented to Perly S. Wilcox of Rochester and it won his support. The building is given in memory of Mary E. Wilcox and Clark L. Wilcox, mother and brother of Perley S. Wilcox. The building was officially and legally transferred to the First Presbyterian Church of Mexico on Friday evening, July 1, 1927. The Deed of Conveyance reads: "In making this conveyance I desire to express the wish that the said building equipment and furnishings be used for the convenience and entertainment of all citizens and residents of the Village of Mexico and adjacent territory without discrimination, subject, of course, to such rules as may be deemed necessary or advisable." Mr. Wilcox endowed the Wilcox House with a trust fund of $85.000 at the time of his death in 1953.

Ceiling Falls

Calamity struck the Presbyterian congregation on Thursday February 16, 1950. The Independent account describes it as follows: "Complete destruction of the interior of the Mexico Presbyterian church met the eyes of two local men late this afternoon when they unsuspectingly opened the inner doors and looked upon a scene of utter devatation reminiscent of the bomb-gutted churches of Europe during the war.

"Dust, crumbled plaster, broken beams and fallen fixtures, which had once been the ceiling, completely blanketed the smashed and splintered pews, choir loft and pulpit. Everything had fallen from all four corners, and had services been in progress when the ceiling came crashing down, it is certain that no one woud have escaped.

"The cause of the fall is unknown and it was not realized by officials of the church that the ceiling was weak. A new ceiling was applied in 1937."

Through the efforts of the congregation; the pastor, the Rev. Charles Terry; and citizens of the village, the interior of the church was repaired and refurbished.

The Manse

The Presbyterian manse, now occupied by the present pastoral family of the Rev. Donald Roth, was given to the church for such use by Luzerne Wilcox, father of Perley S. Wilcox. Mr. Wilcox lived here until his death in July, 1929. The old manse is located on Spring street, now the home of Mrs. Eber Salley.

On July 30-31, 1960 the church celebrated it's 150th Birthday with a banquet on Saturday night and a special sermon by the Rev. Spencer B. Smith on Sunday morning. He was assisted by former pastors Rev. Max House, Rev. Charles Terry, Rev. Leon DeSmidt, and the present minister, the Rev. Donald Roth.

The occurence was marked by the publication of a book from which this account has been adapted.

February, 7, 1867:—

Best known of all living men in this country is surely coming to Mexico. On Friday evening of this week, Feb. 8, he delivers in the Presbyterian Church in the village his popular and instructive lecture on "Self-Made Men," as the sixth popular lecture of the Eclectic Lecture Course. He is Horace Greeley. (The Eclectic Club was a group of the old Academy young men.)

Thursday, March 26, 1874:—
Organ Installed

On Monday afternoon we had the pleasure of listening to the new organ which has just been put in the Episcopal church. It is a beautiful instrument exactly filling the space designed for it, and harmonizing finely with all the other appointments of the church. Its tones are very sweet and rich, and may be varied from the softest flute-like notes that seem to come from afar to those of the greatest depth and volume the capacity of the building will allow. Its music charmed us, and we cannot say too much time on Easter Sunday, April 5.

There are one Manuale of 58 notes and a Pedale of 27 notes, which makes possible a playing of an obligato solo on it.

Rev. B. T. Hall played at the Easter service.

M.E. CHURCH BELL:

March 6, 1873:—

Last week the new M. E. Church bell was, under the very careful and skillful direction of Mr. R. Nelson, placed in the tower of the church; the matter of raising it to its place being successfully managed by Mr. Veeder Green. Scuttles were made through the floor of the gallery, and ceiling above, so that it was raised from the interior instead of the outside as is commonly done, but which could not be in this case. The bell is from the foundry of Jones and C. of Troy. Its weight is 1518 lbs. It is in the key of F, while the bell in the Presbyterian church is in C and the one in the Episcopal is in A. The three thus constitute a minor chord and a regular peal. The notes represented are, do, la, fa, the new bell being the last and the lowest, while the Presbyterian is first and highest in tone. Or as a major chord, their notes are do, me sol. Great and good judgement was used by Mr. L. Miller in making the selection and purchase. The tone is rich and the vibration quite prolonged. It can be very easily distinguished from the other bells, and is giving marked satisfaction and pleasure. We doubt if any village can boast of three better toned bells, or in better concord with each other.

Church Street looking south from Spring Street, about 1900.

Looking south from Grace Church. Note spires of Baptist and Presbyterian churches. Methodist Church on left. About 1903.

Since The "Cracker Barrel" Days - - -

Yes, We've all come a long way from the "good old days" of the cracker barrel and pot-bellied stoves. Today we have the Security Building and Loan Association where your money earns more.

BUILDING, REMODELING and NEW HOME LOANS

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THE MEXICO STORY . .

TOLD IN EXCERPTS FROM INDEPENDENT FILES

MEMORIES:

The following was written by G. H. Goodwin, Esq. and published in the Independent in August 1857.

Death has spared but few of the contemporaries of the earliest events of this town, and whatever of their recolections is worthy of preservation must be recorded soon, or left to vague and unreliable tradition. But two or three persons living in this town prior to the year 1800 are now alive, and less than a dozen who lived here before 1812 are left.

Lake Tragedy

The Disasters of 1799--Probably nothing occurred in the earlier days of the town which created as much consternation and sorrow as the lake disasters in 1799. The drowning of so large a proportion of the settlers of the infant settlement discouraged the survivors, and kept away a large number who intended to come the same year. The accounts of these calamaties in the Gazeteers of the present day are very conflicting and erroneous.

In 1799 Vera Cruz (which included Mexico Point and Texas) was quite a promising place. At the mouth of the creek Mr. Scriba had put up a hotel, store and about six houses, the cellars of which are still discernible. Up the creek and a few rods south of Texas Hotel stood the grist and saw mill. The last remnant of the old dam went off in a flood many years ago, and no ruins are now seen upon the site of the old mills. Further down and near a point Mr. Scriba had selected for a park for the future city, Capt. Geerman had a shipyard, and had constructed a small schooner and other boats.

About this time there was a great scarcity of food in town and Capt. Geerman and Welcome Spencer started in the schooner for Canada after provisions. They did not return and after a few weeks great alarm was felt for their safety. Lights were reported to have been seen on Stony Island, and it was thought they might have been driven there in the gale. A conference was held at Vera Cruz, and it was concluded to send a party in pursuit. Mr. Spencer (father of Welcome), who lived at the time on the John Tiffany place, Mr. Wheaton Green Clark and Mr. Doolittle, all of whom lived near the Lamb schoolhouse, and Nathaniel R. Rood, who lived just east of Richard Hamilton's present residence, were the persons selected to go. Their search was fruitless, and on their return they encountered a great storm and were driven towards Port Ontario.

All Hands Lost

A man on the beach saw the boat coming and when within a few rods of the shore it upset and all were drowned. Wheaton was a very active man and hung to the boat for some time and it was thought he would save himself but no aid could reach him and a heavy wave finally washed him off. Clark's body was afterwards found on the shore near Sandy Creek. Capt. Geerman and Welcome Spencer were never heard from. It was supposed the schooner must have capsized, as some of its contents were reported to have been found floating near Sacketts Harbor. It is not true, as was reported in some of the papers of that day, as well as in nearly all the Gazetteers of the present day, that but a single male inhabitant (Benj. Winch) was left in the settlement. Calvin Tiffany, Col. Parkhurst, Phineas Davis, Col. Hamilton, Mr. Fairfield and others survived. No similar calamity occurred in 1804 as stated.

Our authority for the above statement is Mrs. Sarah Davis of this village, who was living here at the time. The victims, except Geerman, were her nearest neighbors, and her memory of all the particulars is most perfect and vivid. She says the feelings produced in this vicinity can not be ex-

were left in a wild wilderness with a long cold winter ahead of them, and famine staring them in the face. Sherman Hosmer came as early as 1806 and others came so early that they heard these events related many times by those who were here when they occurred; and all agree substantially in the account given above.

Fever Strikes

The sickly season--About forty years ago (ie. 1827) a most memorable time of sickness occurred among the people living in the northern part of this town. Their sufferings were most heartrending. It was a sort of pestilential fever which prevailed along the shore of the lake from Mexico Point to Cape Vincent. The atmosphere in the sick district seemed charged with miasmatic air, and in some neighborhoods almost all the members of every family were reported as sick. On Evarts street, Lake street, and near Port Ontario, there were not well people enough to take care of the unwell. Almost every house was a hospital, and in many of them the effluvia of invalids and dead bodies was terrible.

Famine, too, had to be fought as well as disease. Committees were appointed in this village and Prattville, which daily visited a portion of the infected district with provisions and aid. They cared for the living and buried the dead. Much aid was rendered to the sick by the people from the surrounding country, yet, so extended was the field of labor that, in some instances, eight or ten patients would be assigned to the charge of a single person. Farther north some died for want of care and attention. Thus, for months Disease reigned along the shore, and Death knocked at the door of almost every house. Doctors Sardius Brewster and Fred Smith are represented as having performed a heroic part during this fearful period. Persons now living in this vicinity, who stood at the fevered couch by night and day, are still remembered by the sick ones of that time with the most lively gratitude.

SILAS TOWN:
G. H. Goodwin

This is a new name to nearly all our readers, but a familiar one among our pioneers. It has not been in print, perhaps, since the Revolutionary War. He was a man of much more than ordinary ability, and was a favorite among the settlers, some of whose children now bear his name. To the masses he was an enigma, but not so to his particular friends with whom he was fond of conversing upon the events of his career, the whole story of which he at one time and another told them. Connected with his history there was a strong tinge of romance.

His early life was spent in one of the New England villages where he won the affection of a lovely girl graced with beauty of person and good social position. Mutual vows of attachment were exchanged and the day of their marriage set. The young lady died very suddenly while Town was absent. On his return, not having heard the sad news, he called to see her, anticipating much pleasure in the interview. On inquiring for her he was informed in broken accents that she was dead. This announcement, so sudden, so unexpected, completely overwhelmed him and he was ever after a changed man. His pathway was darkened, his life saddened and his hopes were blighted. His heart was buried in the same grave that closed over her. He grew eccentric and led a roving sort of life.

Served as Spy

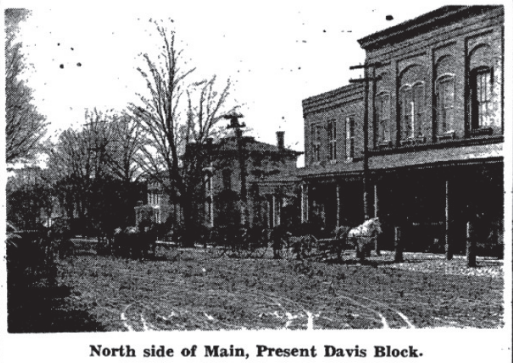
When the ball of the Revolution was set in motion, Town espoused our side and was eager for the contest. The Colonies were in a blaze of excitement and the clangor of arms was soon heard at Lexington and Bunker Hill. Quick, eagle-eyed, and possessing a mind of much penetration, his services were soon sought by our Government as a spy and he was sent out on some of the

(Continued on next page)

Oldest House in Mexico Village

The Shubal Alfred Home, first frame house in the village. Site of first Masonic meeting in Mexico. House now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Harry Arthur. Wing to the left was built in 1807.

Two Views of Main Street



North side of Main, Present Davis Block.

This cooperative was formed 20 years ago for the purpose of servig the farmers in ths area. It is owned and operated by the farmers with a Board of Directors and a Manager.

The business has steadily increased in volume and capacity with new bulk facilities to handle feed and grains on a larger scale with less cost.

Gone are the horse and buggy days when the farmer brought his grist and waited until it was ground, while the little woman did her trading. Now it is on a large scale—grain is taken from the farm in bulk to storage bins at the mill where it is formulated into a dairy ration and returned in bulk to the customers' bin.

By doing business on a larger scale the feed and farm supplies can be handled and delivered with less cost and still maintain a high quality product.

This is the type of business that benefits local people in this area.

LEADERSHIP BY RESEARCH

BEACON RESEARCH
Works for You

Extensive research behind Beacon Feeds is carried on with *you*, the feeder, uppermost in mind. Hundreds of experiments using thousands of chickens, hundreds of dairy cows and swine are conducted annually.

The goal of all these experiments is practical feeds that will help feeders operate more profitably. The success of this work is measured in the success of Beacon customers.

We have interesting data on the results of many recent Beacon experiments. We'd be glad to show them to you and explain why we feel they will lead up to profits for the feeder.

ONTARIO FEED & GRAIN COOPERATIVE, INC.

Jim Forbes, Mgr.

Scenic Ave.

Mexico Phone WO 3-7931

MEMORIES CONT.

most hazardous enterprises and at times obtained very valuable information. He was well known by most of the Generals of the northern army and his name appears among the military documents for that period, particularly the Gen. Gates papers. His tact and shrewdness were such that he was very successful and was in and out of the British army at will. He was connected with Gen. Arnold's expedition to attack Quebec and to complete the conquest of Canada begun by Gen. Montgomery. A number of secret missions were confided to him to execute while in Canada.

The narrations of his services as a spy are said by those who have heard them to have been exceedingly interesting. He was very fond of trapping, fishing, and hunting, and the inducement for his settlement here was the splendid opportunities for gratifying his taste in this respect. He boarded for some time within our present village limits, and afterwards went to Vera Cruz (Mexico Point) where he lived until about 1808, when he died. The last words from his trembling lips were of her whose untimely death he ever mourned. He had no relatives here, but intimate friends supplied his wants while sick, and buried him as he desired, near the waters of the lake he loved so well.

Buried on Island

There is a little island near the mouth of the creek, and but a few rods easterly from Morse's new Hall, to which Mr. Soriba attached much value when the city was laid out, and reserved it for public buildings. Few of the present generation have stood upon the spot which fifty years ago was a sort of rough park that was sure to be visited. It is now a neglected place, covered with trees and tangled bushes, and is inaccessible by boat except on the east side. On this island there are two or three graves, now scarecely discernible, in one of which sleeps all that is mortal of Silas Town.

(Continued on next page)

Mexico Business Section

Looking east on Main Street at the turn of the century.

CONGRATULATIONS

FROM ONE CENTENARIAN TO ANOTHER

We are carrying on a tradition of administering to the health needs of Mexico **begun in this building in 1854.**

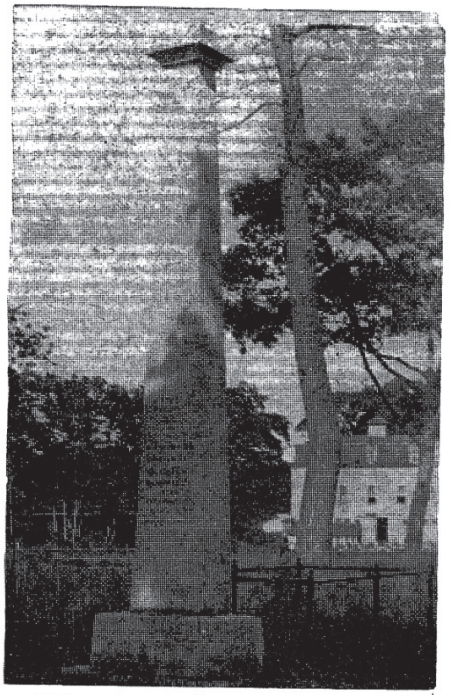
As the role of the druggist changed from a compounder of crude drugs, so have we changed to a pharmacy completely stocked with the miracle drugs of modern science.

We are looking forward to continuing to give you the conscientious and courteous **service that has always been our policy.**

SHUMWAY PHARMACY

Mexico, N. Y. **The Rexall Store** **Ph. WO 3-3431**

Silas Town Monument



Monument marks the grave of Silas Town, an early resident, a Revolutionary War patriot. Grave is on Spy Island.

LOCAL HISTORY CONT.

Vera Cruz was soon wiped out by fire, and deserted. Town's grave was, however, occassionally visited by the pioneers who chanced this way, and nearly all of whom have long since passed the portals of the tomb. Two or three still totter in the form, and but for their knowledge his last resting place would have been as much a mystery as was his life.

Since 1800 the people have visited the Point for pleasure. Youth and age do congregate on that green, and there is chattering and coquetting--gossiping and gamboling--swinging and sporting, bathing and boating. There, too, "Music arises with its voluptuous swell. Soft eyes lock love to eyes which speak again."

Patriotic orations are there delivered, but at this day, neither orator nor audience know that almost beneath them repose the bones of a Revolutonary hero, whose brilliant exploits in the glorious struggle of American Independence would afford a theme that would thrill the hearts of the multitude. His grave is marked with no monumental pile, but he sleeps as well as though it were covered with fretted marble and watered with tears of affection.* The gentle dews of evening silently weep upon the sod, while the rollin surf, as it breaks on the strand, still sings his requiem.

(Since the above was written and about the year 1871 a monument was erected over the grave of Silas Town at Mexico Point.-Ed.)

In her book "Mexico, Mother of Towns" Miss Elizabeth Simpson devotes an entire chapter to the exploration of the Town story. After exhaustive and scholarly research, Miss Simpson was unable to document much of Silas Town's Revolutionary story.

However she concludes her story wth this thought: "In spite of the failure to discover other documentary evidence to verify the story of Silas Town and however much the spy may have exaggerated the value of his services and however much time and repetition may have distorted the details of his story, Mexico still believes in her spy, that he did listen on the island to St. Leger's plans and report to the commanders of Fort Stanwix, that he served his country well and deserved the monument erected to his memory. Further search for proof must be left to some future student of local history and tradition." P155

scout who furnished General Schuyler in the late winter of 1776 with news of the British three-part plan for cutting off New York State from New England; that secreted on Spy Island, Town, in the summer of '77 spied upon St. Leger's forces as they landed at the mouth of Salmon Creek and carried information as to their number and equipment to Gansevort and Willetts at Fort Stanwix--site of the City of Rome, N. Y.

I have much authentic data on Town's ancestry and place of birth, also a mass of more or less confusing informatioo from reliable records of "Silas Town," a Revolutionary soldier. But relative to the traditional services of the Silas Town of Spy Island, no verifiable information to date has been obtainable.

Mr. Taylor received no pertinent answers to his question.

Search For Facts

April 25, 1929:—
Letter from Harry E. Taylor

Town Charter

Wed. April 22, 1891:—
THE INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF MEXICO

Through the kindness of W. Mr. Richardson Esq., we have been furnished a copy of the original act incorporating the Town of Mexico, showing the great extent at that time. No wonder she has been called the "mother of towns." The act reads as follows:

An Act to erect a town in the County of Herkemer, by the name of Mexico, passed the 26th February, 1796.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that so much of the county of Herkemer as is contained within the limts and bounds following, to wit: "Beginning at the northwest corner of a tract of land commonly called Fonda's Forty thousand acre Patent, thence down and along the west side of Canada creek to its junction with Wood creek, thence down and along the waters of Wood creek to the Oneida lake, thence through the middle of the said lake to the west end thereof, thence to the north shore of the Onondaga river, thence down and along the north side of the said river to lake Ontario, thence easterly and northerly along the said lake to the mouth of Black river, thence up and along the said river to the northermost corner of twenty-five thousand acres of land sold by William Constable to William Inman, thence south thirty-seven degrees and thirty minutes west along the northwesterly bounds of the said tract to the northwest corner of the tract commonly called Oathouts Patent, thence south one degree west along the westerly line of the said tract to the place of beginning, shall be and hereby is erected into a separate town by the name of Mexico," and that from and after the first day of April next the freeholders and inhabitants of the said town shall have and may exercise all and every power and privilege which the freeholders and inhabitants of the other towns in this state have and may exercise by law. And the first town meeting in the said town shall be held at the dwelling house of John Myer, situated at Rotterdam, within the said town of Mexico.

Secretary's office of the State of New York, March 11, 1796, I certify the preceding to be a true copy of an original act of the Legislature of this State, filed in this office, compared therewith,

By me,
Jasper Hopper, D. Sec'ry.

Early Mexico Business

Corner of Church and Main Streets looking west. John Cobb Grocery on corner behind flag pole Independent Building shown sixth building from left.

Mexico Town Board 1907

Seated: E. L. Huntington, Supervisor; N. D. Hart, Clerk; A. J. Rose, J. P.; W. C. Shumway, J. P.
Standing: C. W. House J. P.; W. A. Robbins, J. P.

VILLAGE CENSUS
July 6, 1892:—

A subscription was started in 1850 to pay for taking a census of the village of Mexico, of which the following is a copy:

"We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, for value received, mutually and severally promise to pay our ratable proportion of the expense of taking the census of the village of Mexico to Sheldon Remington, or bearer, if said village of Mexico is not incorporated within one year.

Dated at Mexico, December 2, 1850.

J. M. Barrows, J. M. Stacy, Seabury A. Tuller, S. H. and B. S. Stone, John B. Higgins, James S. Chandler, H. C. Peck, L. H. Conklin, Chauncey Sims, C. L. Webb, E. A. Holmes, W. B. Lord, E. C. Mitchell, C. G. Hincley, W. M. Merriam."

(Mexico was incorporated in 1851, becoming a full fledged village with the legal name of Mexico.)

THIS STORE HAD EVERYTHING

Everything from horsecollars to horseradish was carried in the "General Store" of 1861. The above store was photographed in the Pioneer Village, Nebaska, where the cat still snoozes in the crackerbarrel.

The storekeeper often ran the Post Office, too, and remained open evenings for the group of 'whittlers' who congregated around the old pot bellied stove.

THE ONLY THING THAT IS OLD FASHIONED ABOUT THE MEXICO 5 & 10 HERE IN MEXICO IS THE FRIENDLY SPIRIT AND THE PRICES.

STOP IN TODAY AND BROWSE AROUND: YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU DID!

MEXICO 5 & 10

Mexico, N. Y.

Looking East On Main Street

View showing Mexico Hotel, Town Hall and Corner of old Universalist church. Bank building at left. Church is now VF.W. hall.

HOW MEXICO GOT 'GRAB-ALL' TITLE

"In a recent copy of the Independent under the heading of 'Under the Town Clock,' you wondered if someone would not tell you how Mexico came to be called 'Grab-all.' From old settlers and also my grandfather who lived in the village from 1867 until death, I gathered that in the early days there were several wealthy men in the village; in fact, it was somewhat of a financial center and they made a practice of 'shaving notes'---a term for discounting. Because borrowers thought the early lenders rather greedy, they applied to the village the epithet of 'Grab-all.' Perhaps you are aware that the practice of shaving notes is still very common in the South and West and the "Shave" gets closer as one gets farther away from the large centers of the capital. In this state--not New York---the legal rate of interest on contracts is ten per cent and the private lenders generally charge in addition a bonus of five per cent when the loan is made or renewed.

"Concerning the name of 'Grab-all' the late John Erskine of Fernwood in 1906 told the writer the following story: In the early days a traveler from the west was making his way eastward on horseback. It was before the days of railroads and as the country was wild and the roads bad, many travelers rode horses even on very long trips. While sitting about the inns on his nightly stops, whenever he mentioned his destination he was reminded that his route lay through a town called 'Grab-all' and that it bore an evil reputation because of the acquisitive habits of some of its citizens and that he would do well to get through it without harm. Because the warnings increased as he neared the town he became quite alarmed, so much so that when he arrived at the top of the hill to the west of the village he stopped his horse, placed his purse in the tail pocket of his long coat, saw that everything was otherwise in order; then starting his horse again to a gallop, coat tails flying behind him, he rocketed down through the town, thundering over the bridges, never stopping until he had reached the top of the hill to the east. As he breathed his horse, he turned in his saddle to look back over the little hamlet, and was about to congratulate himself on his successful escape when to his horror he discovered that someone had cut off the tails of his coat."

Florida Subscriber

(Courtesy of Mrs. Herschel Watson.)

AFTER 40 YEARS TOWN HALL BUILT

For more than 40 years, the Town Board knew no permanent home.

Until the late 1840's the meeting of citizens was held verywhere in private homes, hotels, and schoolhouses. On Feb. 3, 1846 a report arranging for seeking a town hall was passed and a committee appointed to petition the legislature to pass a law enabling citizens to carry out the report. This report is not in town records but the action of the legislature of May 13, 1846 reveals its provisions. It permitted a tax to be levied to obtain a hall.

On Feb. 22, 1847, the Town Hall Trustees bought from Eldad Smith and Seabury A. Tuller the second story of a wooden building on the south east corner of Main street and South Jefferson, ie. on the site of the Corner Grocery. In 1852 Eldad Smith sold his half of the building to Seabury A. Tuller. On May 3, 1857, Seabury A. Tuller, owning the whole, sold a half to Benjamin S. Tone. Both of these sales were subject to the sale of the second story for a town hall.

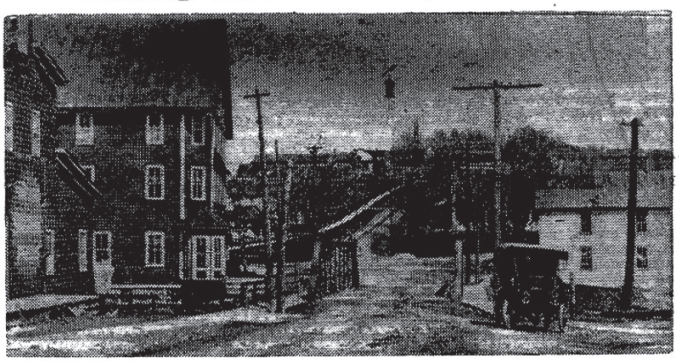
In 1857, it was decided that this was inadequate for a town hall, and on June 29, 1857, the Town Hall Trustees, including Benjamin S. Stone, and Seabury A. Tuller as supervisor, sold the second story to Samuel H. Stone. On the same day, Samuel H. Stone sold the second story to Benjamin Stone and Seabury A. Tuller.

Then the Trustees of Town Hall, freed from the second floor hall, were free to seek another site and eventually to secure the present site of the Mexico Theatre building. Here the town hall was erected and called Washington Hall at the suggestion of Henry Humphries, editor and publisher of the Independent.

November 5, 1931

Somoset Inn, West Main street, for several years operated by Mr. and Mrs. Henry O'Brien, has been sold to Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Staplin and son Forest S., of Antwerp.

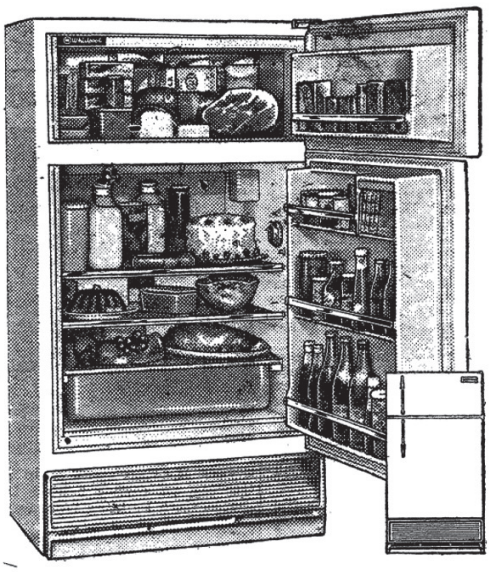
Looking East Toward Pulaski Hill



Picture taken about 1915 (?) Fraternity Hall at left.

When the metal "Icebox" came out in 1865, it was the latest thing in food cooling and storage.

RCA WHIRLPOOL - - - The Most Modern Designed Refrigeration System in the past 100 Years!



RCA Whirlpool - Refrigerators
Washers - Dryers
Dishwashers
Radio — Television — Stereo Phono

CIRCLE SUPPLY CO.

Main St. WO 2-2152

If We Sell It We Service It

If We Sell It We Service It

MEXICO SCHOOLS PART OF CIVIC LIFE

Old Mexico Academy Built In 1920

Following the establishment of the common school districts throughout the town, including No. 5 in Mexico village, the idea of erecting a building two stories high and grading the schools was conceived by John Howard, a well-educated, ambitious and persevering man, who was teacher in the Alfred district (No. 5) during the winter of 1819-20. Through his efforts primarily, districts 5 and 8 (east of Black Creek) were united by the school commissioners on May 8, 1820. The whole of districts seven, eight, nine, and parts of seven others were consolidated within this new area.

First Building

Immediately, even before the consolidation was completed, friends of the venture had cut and drawn logs and made preparations for burning bricks. In spite of the enthusiasm of the group, the undertaking proved to be greater than they expected and when the walls were completed December was well along. With no roof and with the intense cold, there was great danger that the new mortar would be ruined. Under the leadership of Leonard Ames, a great fire was kept burning within the walls until the mortar was dry.

The completed building was twenty-four by thirty-six feet; each story containing a single room. The lower was warmed by a huge fireplace in the north end, reenforced by a great box stove opposite it, while box stoves supplied heat in the upper room. John Howard was installed as teacher of the high school with Laura Fish in control of the other department.

In spite of the enthusiasm and efforts of the townspeople for the new school, their efforts did not seem to include the second story. In order to see his dream come true, it was necessary for John Howard to pay for the second story himself and it was recognized as his personal possession. The debate over the second story may have delayed the building from 1820 to 1822 because records show that classes were held at other places until the latter date. But Mr. Howard's interest in the building was lost when he was forced to sell his portion to meet a mortgage on some farm land.

Called Academy

The Union school was soon called the Academy and was advereised as such in the Oswego Republican of 1825. The secretary of the school, J. M. Bixby announced that the next term of "Mexico Academy" would be under the direction of Mr. William Mather. The tuition was set at $3 per quarter, with board at six to ten shillings per week.

Many of the ablest, best educated, and most responsible men of the town resided at Prattville. Schooners had traded between Mexico Point and Kingston since 1798, and in 1804 there was more trade at the Point than at Utica or Oswego, so a state road was opened from there to Oneida Lake. Prattville was located near the intersecion of this road with the Oswego to Rome road. The people of Prattville, becoming envious of the growing importance of Mexico, obtained from the legislature an act of incorporation for a school in their area.

Area Conflict

The establishment of the Rensselaer-Oswego Academy, by these citizens of Prattville took place on June 10, 1826. The name Rensselaer was chosen in the hope that the great land owner Van Rensselaer would in return for the compliment contribute liberally to the necessary funds. However, the elaborate plans for building did not materialize, and after a year of rivalry between the two villages of Mexico and Prattville, it was decided to open the new school in 1826 in the brick schoolhouse in Mexico; this was a "temporary" arrangement until the Prattville building could be built.

It was a shrewed move on the part of Mexico to permit this Prattville institution to open business in its old brick building. It had served as the only church for all religious societies. Here funerals were attended. It was the town hall. It was the home of schools. Here the academy took firm root. The people of Prattville were disappointed by not receiving the expected funds from Van Rensselaer; subscription drives proved fruitless; the Oswego canal, nearly completed at this time would destroy trade along the Prattville route; Mexico Point had lost its commercial importance; Mexico village was increasing fast; population was attracted there by its water power, its mills and its factories. The academy, which Prattville had founded and had not now the power to remove, contributed largely to Mexico growth. With these factors facing them, the Prattville element finally relinguished control of the organization.

In 1832, under Mason W. Southworth, an attempt was made to establish a manual labor school. A 15 acre tract of land across the street from the school was rented and 10 acres ploughed and planted. After two years the project was abandoned.

Under Church Control

During the first year of Dr. George Hapgood's duties as principal, the school outgrew its quarters and in 1836 a wooden structure three stories high was erected immediately in front of and adjoining the old brick building. The old building was then divided into dormitories.

From 1836 to 1846 the Academy was under the supervision of the old Black River Methodist Episcopal Conference, and the principals of the school were appointed by the bishop. The school again came under the control of the village and in 1845 the awkward and meaningless name "Rensselaer-Oswego Academy" was changed by an act of legislature to the simple "Mexico Academy."

By this time the old brick building was sadly out of repair and the wooden structure had proved too small for increased attendance. New schools were being established in other parts of the county, and being more attractively equipped, began to draw pupils away. Six citizens pledged $2,000 and others enough to raise over $8,000 by the winter of 1854-'55.

1855 Building

During 1855 the old brick portion was torn down, and the new building was erected on the site while school went on as usual (?) in the frame portion which remained standing in front. In the fall this portion, having been sold to Mr. Lewis Miller, had its lower story cut away to make it portable, and was removed to a site to the east, near Black Creek, to serve as a carriage

(Continued on next page)

The "new" High School to the left of the old academy

MEXICO ACADEMY

This Institution is the oldest of its class in this section of the State, having been organized in 1820, and incorporated in 1826. The Academy Building is a fine, brick edifice, ninety-six feet long, fifty feet wide, and three stories high. Its Chapel, Recitation and Music Rooms are beautifully frescoed. The apparatus is new and in complete order. The School is under the charge of Prof. J. D. Steele. The next term opens March 26th.

Advertisement For Old Academy

Graduates Become Famous

ACADEMY GRADUATES

June 26, 1930:—

Military instruction to students was under War Department supervision with an army officer assigned to the faculty. There were about 125 students in the Academy in nineties. One of the principals was S. Mortimer Coon, deceased, later an attorney in Oswego, and included in the graduates were J. T. Headley, secretary of state in 1855; Andrew Parsons, governor of Wisconsin; Luke Parson, lieutenant governor of the same state; former Congressman, Charles R. Skinner; N. W. Nutting, Coulumbus Upson, J. F. Kinney, justice of the Supreme Court of Iowa; George F. Comstock, chief of the court of appeals and others.

Historic Academy 1855 - 1930

This building, erected in 1855, served as a training ground for many great men. Its graduates, from a wide area went on to make names for themselves. It stood on the southwest corner of the site now occupied by the central school.

The Lewis Miller residence, standing to the east of the High School, and at one time used for classrooms.

Eating Out 1861 - - -

Eating Out 1961 - - -

The next time you plan on eating out, plan to visit the Samara Lounge. Enjoy the pleasant atmosphere, the courteous service.

SAMARA LOUNGE

Scenic Ave.

Mexico, N. Y.

BOWLING

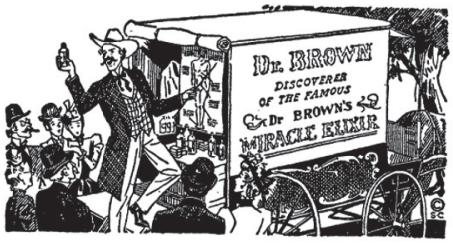
Stop in and

Bowl a Game

NOWHERE IS PROGRESS GREATER THAN IN THE LOCAL PHARMACY

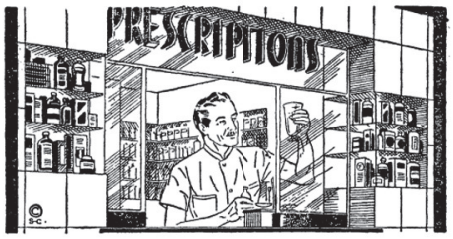
The corner drug store was often called the "Apothecary Shop" prior to 1900. It did not have ice cream sodas, cigarettes and cameras. Instead the proprietor was likely to have various herbs growing in his back-yard, and his shelves were full of patent medicines.

Even in the period from 1850 to 1900, the pharmacist was usually a well educated man who was dedicated to his profession. Today, at Crandall's Pharmacy the prescription counter is only one department of a store that serves a variety of community needs.



Many a crowd gathered to hear the traveling medicine man sell his wares and promise "miracles" of his "sugar and water" compounds . . . . WE DON'T PROMISE "MIRACLES" . . . BUT WE DO GUARANTEE SERVICE

Even as Paracelus in the 16th century pursued the union of chemistry with medicines TODAY'S PHARMACISTS JOIN WITH DOCTORS TO BEST MEET YOUR HEALTH NEEDS.



In addition to a knowledge of chemistry and botany, today's pharmacist must be an expert microscopist and is ready to serve the public's health at all times . . . .

CRANDALL'S PHARMACY

Mexico WO 3-3171

Parish NA 5-7852

SCHOOLS CONTINUE TO EXPAND

THE ACADEMY CONT.

factory. The erection of this 1885 school involved the trustees in a debt of about one thousand dollars. An act of the legislature was obtained and money loaned by the comptroller who was reimbursed by a levy and collection of a tax on the town, and so the institution was relieved from debt.

The third floor of the new building was arranged for a boys' dormitory and many are the stories which the mere mention of those rooms will recall to those who roomed there.

Military Academy

In 1893 Col. Melzar Richards (ret.) of the United States Army leased the Academy building and organized the school as Mexico Military Academy, with a larger faculty, a military staff of majors, a surgeon, and a chaplain, and a cadet battalion fully officered. The cadets' uniform was the standard gray cadet cloth consisting of the type of uniform worn at West Point. The charge for boarding students was $250 for forty weeks, including board, tuition, heat, lights, and a room.

On Nov. 21, 1895 the Regents granted a charter to Mexico High School but public furore was such that the name was changed to Mexico Academy and High School in 1898 to satisfy the alumni of the old Academy. As such it continued until 1928.

1855 School Razed

In that year the buildings as they stood were declared inadequate by the State Department and the fourth Academy building was dedicated. In 1930 in spite of certain efforts to preserve it, and by an act of legislature, the old 1855 building was torn down.

The 1928 building had a short life, for in 1936 it was almost completely destroyed by fire. During the next two years classes were held in any available place in the village. A notice in the Sept. 2, 1937 issue of the Independent indicated this arrangement:

Make-shift Rooms

Senior high English—Dairymen's League Building.
Senior high History—Fire Hall.
Sr. hi. Math. and Sci.—Dairymen's League bldg.
Commercial subjects—Lighting Building.
Ag. and shop—Brown Building.
Homemaking—Lighting Bldg.
Latin and French—Lighting Bldg.
9th Grade classes—Town Hall
8th Grade classes—Methodist Church.
7th Grade classes—Hogoboom House.
1st, 2nd, and 3rd Grades—Zone House, Railroad street.
4th and 5th Grades—Leonard Block, Main street.
6th Grade—Taylor block over Shumway's store.
7th Grade—Hogoboom House on Church street.
8th Grade—M. E. Church.
9th Grade—Town Hall.
Sophomore boys—Dairymen's League bldg., Mr. Beebe.
Sophomore girls—Lighting bldg. Miss Washburn.
Junior boys—Brown bldg.-Mr. Stanton.
Junior girls—Lighting bldg.-Miss Fish.
Seniors—Fire Hall,-Miss Thomas.

Central School

As a result of the centralization vote in 1936 the present main building was erected, the corner stone being laid June 19, 1937 with dedication ceremonies on June 25, 1938. The new school is named Mexico Academy and Central School, thus retaining a connection with the old and favored Academy of 1826.

Upon the establishment of the Central School district, five acres of land for additional athletic fields located north of Black Creek and facing Liberty street were bought from Dr. H. K. Leonard. Through the efforts of Dr. L. D. Pulsifer the old tannery and mills along Black Creek were purchased in 1939. The 1822 half acre forms the southwest corner of the present main campus.

In connection with the 1937 centralization program, a six grade building was provided at Palermo. This $35,000 building, as was the main building, was built through the help of PWA funds and contained three rooms and an assembly hall. In 1949 need for more room necessitated the addition of another wing. The entire building was destroyed by fire on Monday, May 13, 1958. The present building, housing six grades, a gym-cafeteria combination, library, and office was opened for use in November, 1958.

In 1953 an elementary branch was opened in New Haven. It contained classrooms, cafeteria-playroom, and office. This proved inadequate for the growing population and five years later additions were made.

New Elementary

Growth was also felt at the village site and in September, 1957 a modern elementary school housing the first four grades and administration offices was opened on Mill (Academy) street. At the same time the main building was renovated to provide music, art, industrial arts and agriculture areas. The athletic field was also enlarged.

These buildings now house the student populations from 4 districts which is estimated at 2,062 for the 1961-'62 school year. A staff of 90 teachers, 10 custodians, 20 cafeteria workers, and 17 bus drivers is employed to serve the pupils.

Much of this development has taken place since 1946 when Stephen T. Stanton was appointed supervising principal after serving as vocational agriculture teacher since 1928. In 1957 Mr. Stanton was named district principal with John A. Hollands high school principal and Reatha Rowe elementary supervisor.

Schools Were A First Thought For Early Mexico Settlers

The first school in the village of Mexico was opened in 1811 in Shubal Alfred's barn by Harriet Easton. This was one of the so-called "private" schools, taught and controlled by women teachers, and probably a carry-over from the old "Dame Schools" of New England. However, in 1813 the Town of Mexico was organized into school districts, each district having its own public school. According to the numbering then in effect, Mexico village was known as District No. 5.

The first of these schools in the village was built in 1813 at the forks of the road on West Main street and was painted red. A letter of Caty Brown Wheeler written in the summer of 1813 tells of the difficulty of getting children to the newly-opened school: "Harriot and Artemus have been to school some this summer, two miles through the woods, no road except the bushes cut and the trees mark'd."

First Division

By 1815, the population has so grown that it was decided to divide No. 5 into two districts. Black Creek was the dividing line with the west district retaining the number 5 and the new east district being No. 8. A schoolhouse for No. 8 was built east of Salmon Creek. The exact location of this building is somewhat of a puzzle. It was at one time known as the "Mill School," placing it somewhere near John Morton's mill. In 1876 D.W.C. Peck stated that it stood just east of Deacon Asa Beebe's who then lived on the corner of North and Pulaski streets. However, A. Parke Burgess reported that the old schoolhouse stood on the site of the Barrett hotel, near the base of the triangle at the east end of Main street just below the house now owned by Admiral and Mrs. Southworth). Probably both accounts are right as there often was moving of entire buildings.

First Union

In 1820 the school commissioners voted favorably on John Howard's suggestion of consolidating the two districts (5 and 8) into one district. The idea was to construct a school to house all the children. The united district took the number 5 and now included all of the present village and almost three times that area in addition. One half acre of land on Main street in the southwest corner of the present school campus was deeded to the trustees of District No. 5, on March 20, 1822. On this site was built the two story brick building that came to be known as the Academy.

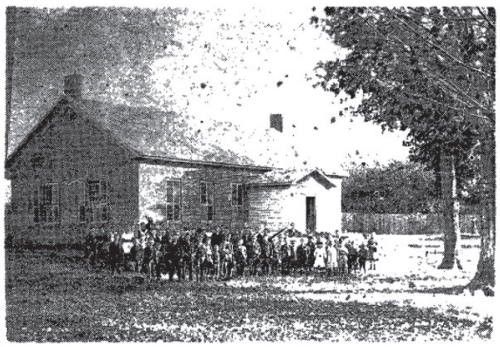
By 1829 crowded conditions at the Academy necessitated moving the lower school, and No. 5 district was redivided. The west part retained the number 5 and the east portion called No. 6 instead of 8 as before the union. It is possible that the new district 5 had to build a new school on the south side of Butterfly Road (County House Road) as the original building was being used as a carpenter shop.

Third District

The district east of Black Creek was divided to form a third district lying east of Salmon River in 1838. This was

(Continued on next page)

Old District 8 School



House now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Murphy was one of the last district schools. In the group above is Ernest Stone, brother of Harry L. Stone, who at the age of 92 is the oldest member.

An Elementary School Group of 30 (?) Years ago

Grade Classes of Early 20's

Those who could be identified are: Howard Ellsworth, Preston Vorce, Ruth Roberts, Mike Giovo, Marvin Vincent, Dorothy Hall, Mary Taylor, Florence Tourdot, Sanford Main, Alfred Clifford, Winifred Roberts, Newton Preman, Alton Reidel, Beatrice Wilcox, Barbara

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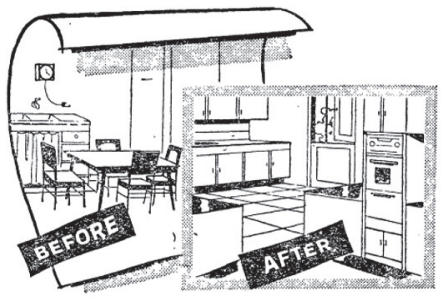

- Formica tops made to order.
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Let Sal's build your kitchen cabinets and you get at dealers cost—any appliance to complete the installation.

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Sal's Kitchens

Main St. Mexico, N. Y.

Call Anytime

Mexico WO 3-7243 or WO 3-3741

known as District No. 9 or Phineas Davis District. With this change came the final numbering of districts to the permanent numbers of 7, 8, 9. The No. 9 school was built on the east side of North street. (Perhaps on the site now occupied by Mrs. John Leary).

In 1850 District No. 6, known as No. 8, prepared to build a school house. A brick building was erected in 1851 on the corner of Church street and Madison Avenue. In 1861 the Independent reported: ".The school at the brick schoolhouse in this village is in a most flourishing state. The number of pupils in attendance is considerably over a hundred and the progress they make in their studies speaks well for their diligence as well as the diligence and efficiency of their teachers, Mr. John Taylor and Mrs. Everts." In 1884 a third room was added to the two-room building. The registration in 1887 was Senior room 40, Middle room 37, and Primary room 37.

In 1866 land was purchased on the west side of North street for a new No. 9 school. A part of that building now is included in Dunning's store.

Districts United

The consolidation of the three districts into a single district, No. 8, took place in 1869. Under this plan the Academy was to serve as the high school department with each district to retain its school as a primary school. However, on an appeal from some of the residents, this action was nullified by the State Department of Education and the three districts and the Academy operated separately. But on request of some parents who did not want to send their children to the old district schools, the Academy organized an elementary department in 1870.

Districts Abolished

But old animosities were put aside in 1895 when consolidation became almost necessary as a result of State Department rulings. At this time the Academy building, equipment, and campus of about two acres were given to Union District No. 7, and the new board of education empowered to sell all lands of the district schools.

No. 7 property was eventually purchased by Perl Doil Ladd. No. 9 became a part of the Dunning store; and No. 8 was made into a dwelling now occcupied by Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Murphy.

Centralization

Centralization of all the schools in the town of Mexico, with the exception of the Colosse district, took place in 1936 and to the Mexico districts centering in Mexico village other districts in adjoining town were added, making a total of 31 districts in Central District No. 1.

A report in the June 28, 1938 Independent describes the results of that voting:

"Mexico voters made history and cast a decision that will reach far into the future in its effect on July 22, 1936.

"It was then, after months of planning, weeks of painstaking research on the part of its backers that centralization was voted for Mexico and what was to be the central district. It was no endorsement of the minority. Results of the election on centralization pointed clearly to the path that was to be taken. 1,483 votes were cast on July 22, 1936.

"Keyed to intense excitement, the largest throng probably ever to assemble in front of the Town Hall on Main street heard the ringing announcement of Chairman James C. Feeney at 8 p. m. that the centralization plan had been carried.

"Hours before voting started at 2 p. m. voters were converging upon the Town Hall where the balloting was to be done. Crowds pushed into the main arteries of the village and cars and trucks and wagons and even buses carried interested voters to the hall. The 10 voting booths were lined up in front of the stage in front of the hall and for six busy hours, levers of the machines were clicking steadily, rolling up one of the largest votes ever cast on an issue coming before the voters of this vicinity.

First Board

"After the result was known, Chairman Feeney announced that five members of the board of education were to be elected. They were Cameron Loomis, Miss Hildred Trim, Dr. L. D. Pulsifer, Leon Valley, and R. Austin Backus.

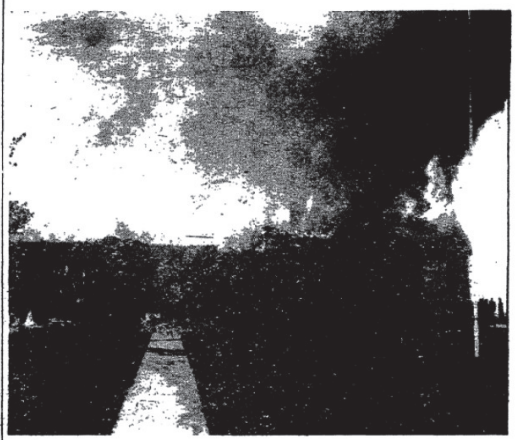
elections were: Mrs. Floyd Jones, Daniel Fones, Albert Felt, Hubert C. Smith, Leroy M. Miner, Charles Hammecker, Beryl Roach, Charles Hurlbut, John Maynes, Bessie Farmer and Peter Collins.

"And then the centralization plan was given its official impetus when Lee Reeves made a motion that a central district be formed. The motion was seconded by Dr. Earl A. Mowry and was carried by the meeting."

Honored

Miss Irene Hungerford for whom school library is named.

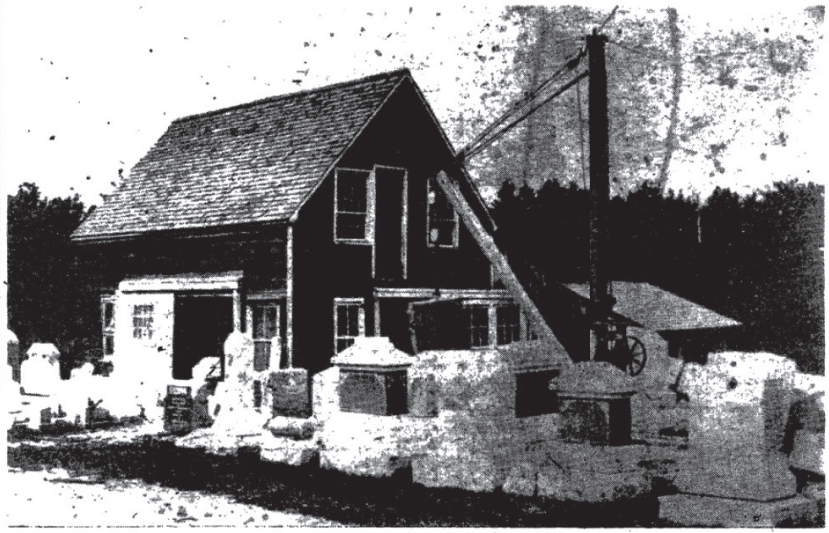
Palermo School
Part of Original Centralization



Scene at fire that completely destroyed building in 1958, attributed to vandalism. No perpetrator of the blaze was ever prosecuted.

Tudor style school at Paler mo, first of outlying schools.

YEARS OF TIMELESS BEAUTY



. . . can be expressed to future generations by a Rock of Ages Family Monument. Let us show you how symbolism, as expressed by Rock of Ages designers, can add graceful beauty and dignity to your memorial and can bring consolation to your family.

ROCK OF AGES

Memories
Are The Mile
Stones That
Measure Time.

KELLOGG MEMORIALS, Inc.

WO 3-3543 Mexico, N. Y.

63 Years of Dedicated Service

"Ranch Type"
1858
Sturdily Built
Still Standing

Our Homes of Quality
Also Built To Last
For Many Years

A Real "Ranch Type Home Is Shown Above.

This log cabin is preserved today at Beatrice Nebraska, but it is representative of many houses built by the pioneers on the frontier. It is made from hand-hewn logs and chinked between logs with clay. In these pioneer days the furniture was usually homemade and the floor was often of hard beaten earth. The older ones usually heated by a fireplace.

The "ranch-type" house of today does not look much like the home-steaders cabin. That's progress. Today, building a house is a job for specialists, for those who have the special skills and equipment. Even selecting the materials is a job for an expert. This is where the MEXICO LUMBER COMPANY COMES IN. SEE US TODAY FOR HELP IN BUILDING A MODERN HOME SUCH AS THOSE SHOWN HERE.

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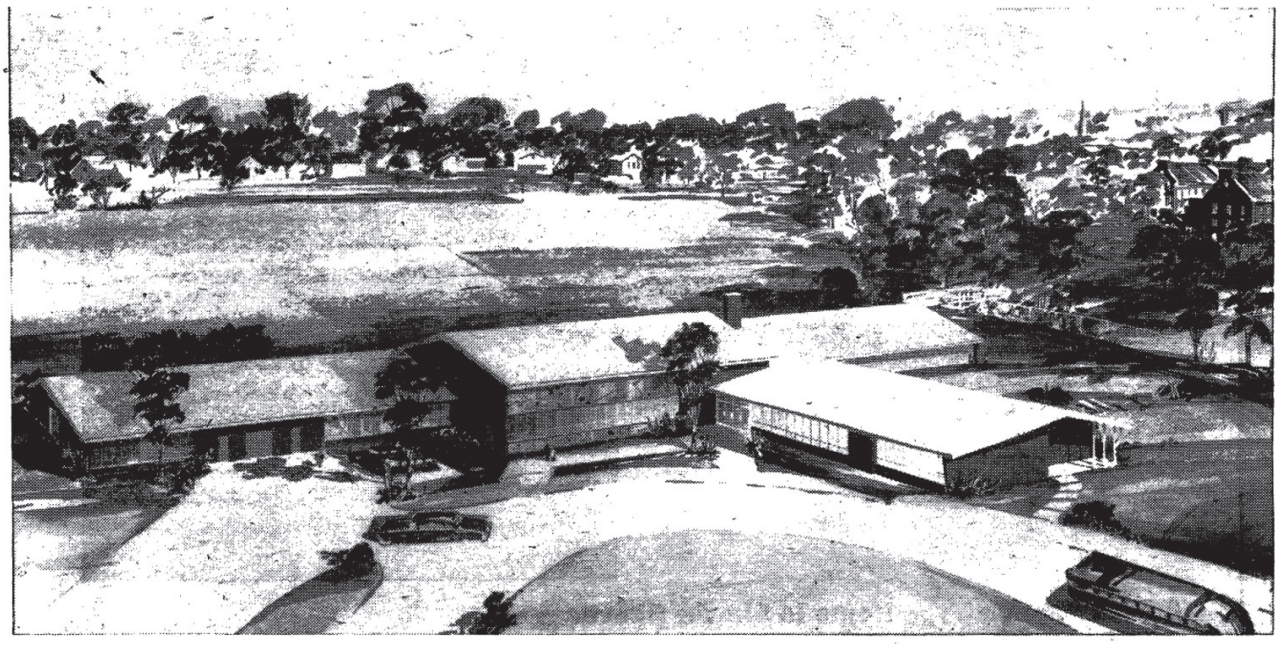
Cement

MEXICO LUMBER & COAL CO., INC.

Scenic Ave.
WO 3-3621

Mexico, N. Y.
WE DELIVER



Above is architect's rendition of the new elementary school on Academy Street. The school was built in 1957 to accomodate a growing student population.

Fort Leazer School Class—1922

First row: Francis Smith, Zerita Bloodgood, Margaret Buck, Alfred Morton, Don Mowry, Arthur Southworth, Myron Johnson, Marion DuBois, Nelson Noel, Robert Smith.
Second Row: Chester Maahs, Lawrence Smith, Robert Countryman, Mrs. Fravor, Anton Maahs, Edna Smith, Pauline Countryman, Cecile Morton, Grace Buck.

High School Classes In 1923

Row 1: Bertha Tourot, Francis Glenister, Howard Ellsworth, Fred Kellogg, Marjory Thompson, Edith Roach, Katy Turk, Leanna Cone.
Row 2: Evelyn Holden, Gail Dunn, Camilia Graves, Marjory Sharpe, Ruth Simmons, Arloine Backus.
Row 3: Grace Newstead, Mildred Kenyon, George Aho, Ruth Barton, Donald Dunn, Henry Munger, John Mason, Bessie Everts, Elsie Davis, Ruth Temple, Mae Barnes.

The Mills of the Pioneers Ground Slowly

THE ROMANCE OF MILLING

Particularly with the old water-powered mills, caught the public fancy and much has been said about the old mills, both in music and in fiction.

The old stone grinding wheels that turned the kernels of wheat or corn into grist and flour are outdated by many years and have been replaced by huge modern electric powered machines as used by Rex Star Feeds.

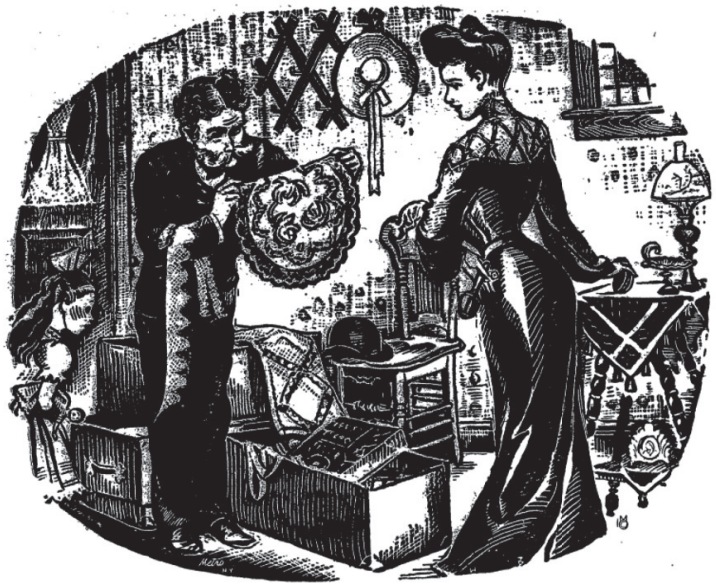
Farmers used to throw two sacks of grain over the back of a horse and take them to the mill. The miller ground one sack for the farmer and kept the other as his pay for the job.

Greater Gains Faster . . . You Get More For Your Feed Dollars

Yes, Get Greater Gains by using scientifically formulated feed for cows, hogs, chicks and calves.

REXSTAR FEEDS
Reginald D. Backus
WO 3-7011 Mexico, N. Y.

New Look 1861



Fashions For 1961

Fashions For

Men, Women, and Children

S. J. RAMSEY & SON DEPARTMENT STORE

Main Street, Mexico

Old Academy Bell Still Starts School Year

THE ACADEMY BELL
September, 23, 1937—

A few days ago the contractors placed the old bell from the Academy building in the cupoloa of the new school. It is planned to have the bell ring on special school and local occasions.

This bell has a long interesting history. It is said to have been made in Ogdensburg 72 years ago; and until the old Academy was razed it hung in the cupola of that building and was rung four times daily during school days for more than a half century. In the school that was partially destroyed by fire, this bell was kept on a frame which was built for that purpose in one of the rooms. The bell is still located on this frame which has been placed in the cupola of the new present building.

Many interesting anecdotes have been told about this bell. Probably one of the more recent ones is the story of some boys taking the clapper out of the bell one Halloween night a few years ago; and C. H. Evarts, a member of the Board of Education at that time, offered a reward of $5. to anyone who would return it. It was never found, however until the old building was torn down and it is believed that it had been dropped between two partitions.

In the 1937 high school annual, the following poem was very fitttingly used in a tribute paid by the 1937 class to the old bell.

I Am The Old Academy Bell

Of the sons of Mexico who
heard my first tolling,
Not one hears me now.
I look back upon countless
morning scenes
Of young folk happily loitering
to school,
Scenes that changed year by
year;
Here, a new face--there, one
missing.
As the years rolled by I sometimes saw
One of these missing faces,
Before the school, bearing the
marks
Of time, and longing for days
gone by.
I tolled the sad news of departure
Of our sons to three great wars.
I tolled the glad news of their
return.
I have looked down these many
years
Upon the memorial stones
erected
To those who did not return.
I am very old; I have seen
many things.
But I am not yet too old to
enjoy
The sounds of little running
feet
Or shouts of children happy at
play.
I am the Old Academy Bell.

LOCAL YOUNG MAN BOWLS PERFECT SCORE
April 2, 1931:—

Leland Druce has proved himself a wizard by rolling a perfect score of 300 on the Wilcox Memorial alleys. This feat was accomplished Thursday evening of last week when Leland bowling on the Dairymen's League team against the Firemen's team, made this perfect score, the first ever rolled on the local alleys. Leland is now backing in the charmed circle of bowling, receiving a host of congratulations from his envious friends, yet maintaining his modesty to a marked degree.

We are almost led to believe that he has been studying the life of Col. Lindbergh and putting his virtues into actual practice.

FORMER TEAMS HAVE MADE RECORDS

Baseball Team—1919

This team never lost a game all season. Left to right: (standing): Henry Ballard, Joe Taylor, Harold Porlier, Gale Whitney, Mike Giovo, George Runion, Homer Ludington, Walter O'Connell, Coach.

Front: Joe Springer and Howard Ellsworth.

1920 Girls' Basketball Team

Left to Right: Ruth (Willmarth) Saulsberry, Marjorie (Ramsey) Luddington, Doris Jones, Mary Horn, Doris (Whitney) DeLong, Clara Sommers, Mildred (Borden) Fish, Walter O'Connell coach.

High School Teams Showed Athletic Skill

Cross Country Team

Above is the Cross Country team that was champion of Oswepo County in 1923. Sitting: Fred Kellogg, Connie Horn, "Stub" Cross, Clarence Jencks.
Standing: Francis Glenister, "Prof" Ley, Clyde Sutliff.

Basketball Team of '22-'23

Sitting: Clark Newton, John Mason, Mike Giovo.
Standing: Hewitt Kessler, Connie Horn, Stewart Ley, Fred Kellogg, Jack O'Brien.

Very Little Service Needed Here!

But, with the large number of automobiles on the road today, service is a must.

MODERN CARS REQUIRE

MODERN SERVICE

FORBES MOBIL SERVICE

Pick Up and Delivery Service

• WASHING • LUBRICATION
• MINOR REPAIRS • WHEEL BALANCING
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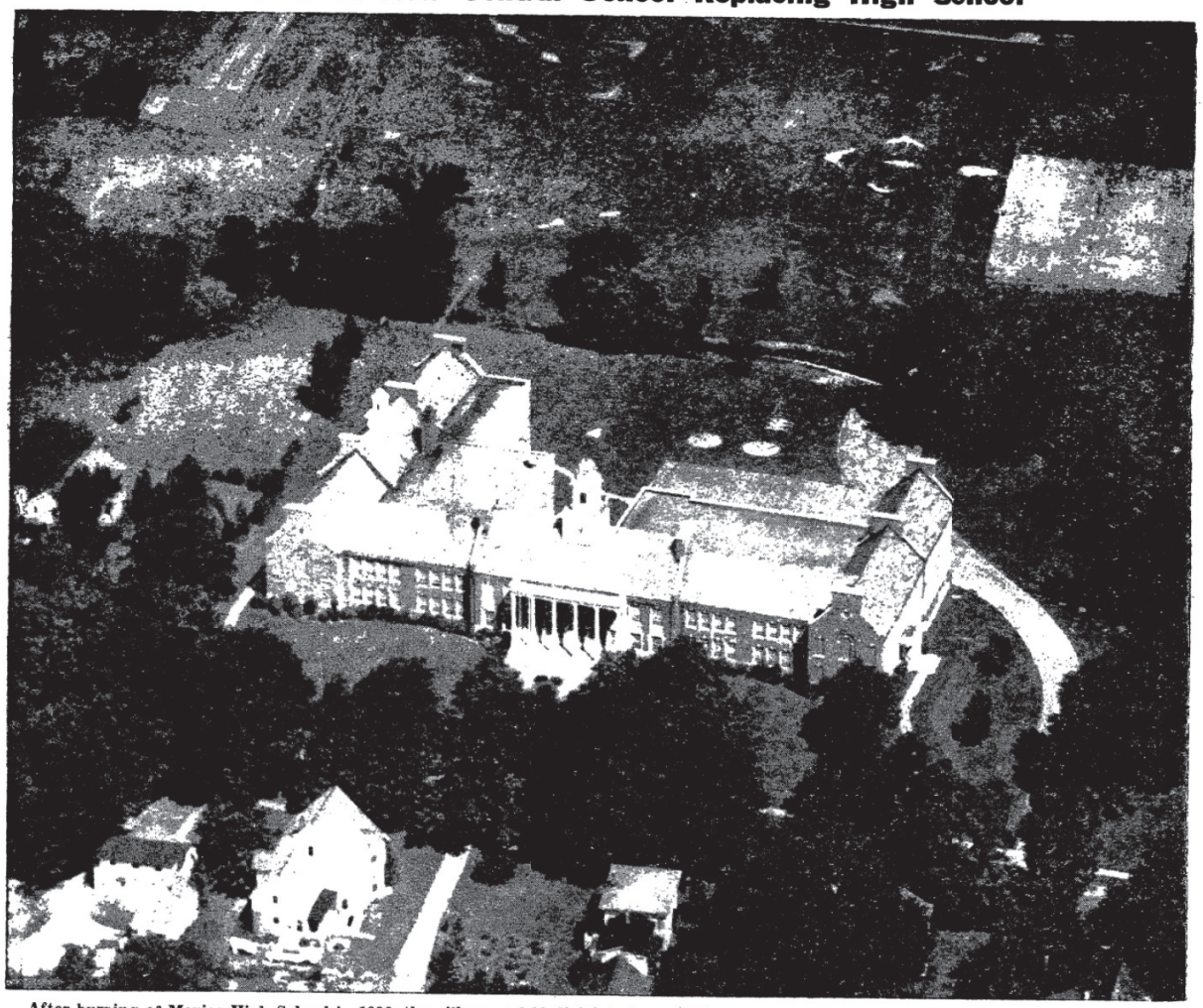
Aerial View of New Central School Replacing High School

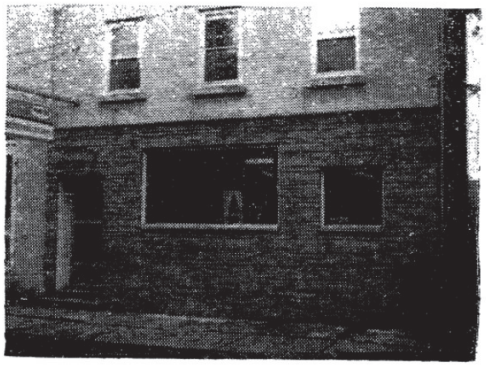


After burning of Mexico High School in 1936, the village and 23 districts formed the Mexco Academy and Central School system. The picture shows the old athletic field.

BACK IN THE OLD DAYS

Above is pictured the building where our now modern insurance office is located. The stage coach pictured was the luxurious way of traveling around the village of Mexico. Times do change just as insurance methods change.

Now In The Present Day



100 years ago Insurance was something that was put aside. No one had security unless they saved all their money under the floor boards.

TODAY, everyone can have security with adequate insurance and at low cost.

Be sure to see HOLLISTER INSURANCE AGENCY who have many, many years of trusted service behind them.

Remember, partial insurance is about as foolish as none at all!

Make Sure you're completely covered

HOLLISTER INSURANCE AGENCY

Jefferson St. WO 3-7851 Mexico, N. Y.

FIRE DEPARMENT KEEPS TRADITIONS

111 Year History Puts Firemen At Top of Civic Group

Use of fire fighting equipment in the village was first mentioned in reference to Salem Town Beebe's little engine, made in Asa Beebe's foundry. The engine was used to throw water supplied by a bucket brigade when the Methodist church burned in 1850.

On June 2, 1852, $70 was voted by the village to buy a hook and ladder truck and on Dec. 10 of that year 30 men formed Hook and Ladder Company, No. 1.

In 1855 a Bucket Brigade was organized and captained by David Goit. Each member was equipped with a leather bucket which he was to keep ready in case of fire. Each man lettered his bucket with his name.

Engine Company No. 1 was formed by 21 men on April 7, 1860. On March 10, 1861 the account of a fire in the store of A. Thomas (Newell's old stand) in which nothing was saved except the safe mentioned, "Here was the first appearance of the Fire Company with the engine." Nearby buildings were saved. The engine, made in 1851 and bought by he village in 1861, appeared in the 1961 Firemen's Field Days Parade.

By March 28, 1861 an engine hall had been built but not equipped. A resolution to request the village trustees to raise $350 for the purchase of 700 feet of hemp hose and $150 to finish off and paint the engine house and provide stoves for same was presented. It had also been voted to have uniforms for the men.

The annual meeting of Protection Engine Company, No. 1 for the election of officers was advertised in the same paper. William Penfield, foreman, and H. S. Chandler, sec. signed the notice.

The following officers were elected: William Penfield, foreman of engine; J. H. Tuller, 1st assistant do; L. H. Conklin, 2nd assistant do; L. M. Conklin, foreman of hose; A. C. Thomas, assistant do; L. F. Alfred, president of the company; A. R. McKenzie, vice president; S. L. Alexander, treasurer; A. J. Young, secretary.

Engine Hall Completed

A Corporation Notice in the April 4, 1861 issue of the paper called a town meeting to be held on the first Tuesday in May to discuss proposals for the completing and equipping the engine hall. The following items were included: To purchase hose for fire engine, $350; to purchase two stoves and pipe for the same for engine house, $32; to ceil and finish engine room, $10; to construct reservoir, $25; to purchase implements for Hook and Ladder Company and to keep same in repair, $30." All items were approved.

Reservoirs Built

The reservoir provided for in the list was the first of a series. The first was located in front of the engine hall and extended under the road way of North Jefferson street. It measured 15 by 30 feet with a depth of 10 feet. It was filled by A. Thomas' force pump in Toronto Mill. Later a reservoir was constructed (1881) on the east side of Church street. The next year the village trustees voted to build four more; one on East Hill, at Railroad and Cemetery Streets (Scenic Ave. and Liberty street); near M. Scott's (Robert Halsey's house on Main); and near the cheese factory on West Main street east of the brook).

On April 11, 1861 the Independent announced the election of Leonard Ames, Jr. as chief engineer of the Fire Department and the editor remarked: "As the chief cause of contention in the Engine Company---'the Almighty Dollar'--has been disposed of satisfactorily, we hope, in the purchase of a uniform, we expect to see the Company filled and organized without further delay or difficulty."

Engine Tested

The new engine was tested "to the satisfaction of the firemen, the spectators, and the engine." Later tests revealed: "More experiments were made Saturday p. m. to test the pow-

engine threw 39½ feet farther than did the pump; but some are of the opinion that there was not sufficient head of water to fully test the power of the pump."

Competition

On Thursday, April 18, 1861 the following news item appeared:

"Our village was thrown into a state of excitement on Thursday last (11) between nine and ten o'clock a. m., in consequence of an alarm of fire being given. The Fire Company immediately got out the engine, and were proceeding to the fire when they learned that it was extinguished. The fire was at the house of Mr. E. G. Burroughs, on Pulaski street . . .

The ladies of the neighborhood, we are told, on discovering the fire, at once formed themselves into a fire company, and went to work in earnest--some removing the furniture from the house; some drawing water, and others carrying it up ladders, in buckets, to throw on the fire. By their prompt and united action the flames were prevented from spreading . . . Our village Fire Company must be on the alert, now that there is a rival company, composed of ladies, else, perhaps, their laurels will be taken from them."

First Parade

The first parade of the Fire Department on July 4, 1861 was reported in the Independent: "Our firemen had selected this day for a general parade. They had recently got a new uniform but having never appeared in it on parade there was much curiosity to see them. Soon after nine they commenced marching through the principal streets preceeded by our martial band and presented a very fine appearance. The Engine and Hose Companies wore a neat modest uniform, much alike, while that branch of the service known as the Hook and Ladder Company, composed of somewhat "solid men' came out with more brilliant colors, something after the style of the Zouaves, which were much noticed and admired by our children and young ladies; and not a few elderly ladies, it is fair to presume, enjoyed the sight amazingly. And who is there, that can appreciate the beautiful, that could gaze at such a magnificent display of red pants and not be vastly surprised and delighted?

"They worked the engine (which is one of the neatest and prettiest we have ever seen and which is kept by the boys in the most perfect order) and hauled ladders and went through the exercises in a very creditable manner and with a promtitude and skill on the part of both officers and men of which any organization might be justly proud.

"In the afternoon every vehicle from a stage coach to a gig and from that down as far as one can get---almost down to a wheelbarrow--was brought out and loaded with firemen and citizens who departed with great speed to the Lake to finish 'the day we celebrate.' "

Steamer Bought

Because fifty men were needed to operate the buckets and engine and often only 14 showed up for fires, the firemen petitioned the village fathers to buy a steamer; they even threatened to disband. The question of the steamer remained a point of contention

(Continued next page)

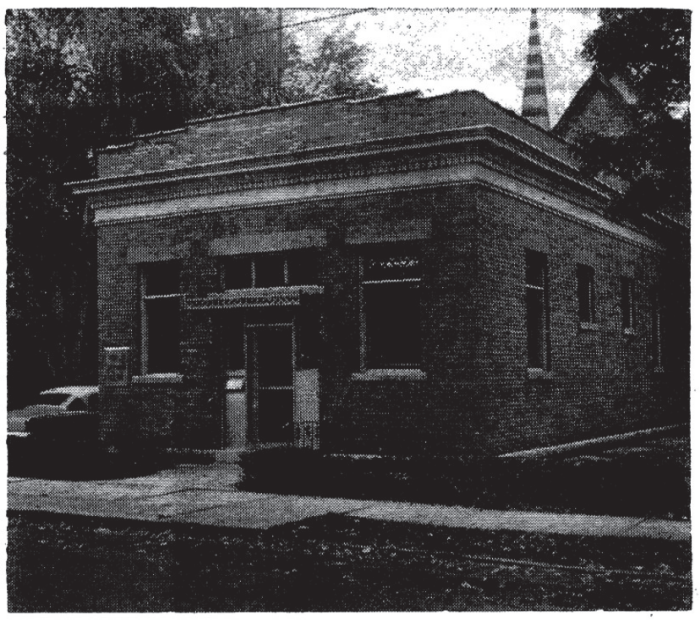
The Weed Hose Co., 1890

Picture taken on Main Street in front of the George W. Stone dry goods store, now Giovo's Candy Store.

Left to right: Mike Tully, William H. Sherman, Albert Bequillard, Fred A. Thomas, Will Servis, Fred Stone, Earl Mixer, Arthur Becker, Ernest Stone, George H. Sampson and Bert Miller. Ernest Stone is 91 years of age and resides at Dolgeville, N. Y. (note Universalist Church spire beyond town hall.)

ANOTHER OLD MEXICO INSTITUTION

Over 60 Years of Trust and Service



"A Full Service Bank"

Commercial Checking Accounts	Individual Checking Accounts	Night Depository
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Personal Loans	Real Estate Mortgage Loans	Bank Money Orders

FIRST NATIONAL BANK
MEXICO, NEW YORK

Member Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation

vote finally approved 135 to 45 of buying a steam engine at a cost of $4000 in 1887.

When the new Silsby engine arrived a gala time was held by everyone in town. Towed by A. C. Thomas' team, it was drawn up and down Main street and at night a grand display of fireworks with a huge bonfire were held. The question of how far the new engine could shoot a stream of water was settled when it was found that small boys could be driven out of the Academy belfry. It also could throw a stream of water over the Presbyterian church steeple, the highest building in town. One doubter maintained that it wouldn't protect his house on Pulaski Hill. The firemen connected two hoses with a Siamese coupling and, with Gil and Ben Robbins at the nozzel, they turned the water on full force and knocked the chimney right off the doubter's house.

At the time the new steamer was purchased, the department was organized in four companies, Engine, Hook and Ladder, the Weed and the Sullivan Hose Companies. Although new uniforms were purchased, the hosemen still had to run with the carts; the engine was drawn by a team of horses. The first team at the fire hall was paid.

First Bell

In 1896 the department was authorized to select a bell for the Engine Hall belfry from among those no longer needed by the district schools. In the March 24, 1938 Independent the following account appeared:

"The 100 pound, gray fire bell was lowered from its mooring atop the old station on Jefferson street Monday afternoon and hardly had the thud of its landing on the concrete floor passed before it brought back memories of more than a half century ago to some of the workers.

"Engraved on the bell's side were the words: 'Presented to District No. 8, 1886.'

"Surprised, Fire Chief Orson Pond exclaimed: 'Why that old bell used to call me into the district No. 8 schoolhouse.'

"A few spectators who had been watching the removal of the bell said that they too attended school was conducted in the building now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Harry Feeney on Church street. (House now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Kay Murphy).

"Curiosity as to how the bell finally landed in the fire station, and at what date it was placed there was quickly settled by Fireman Earl Parker. He said that the bell was given to the Fire Company in 1896 when the district No. 8 school was discontinued to become a part of the old Mexico Academy school system.

"Firemen say that it will be placed in the new building."

First Truck

As a result of a vote by the people, the village board in 1928 bought a modern motor truck, including pumper and chemical equipment for about $6000. Again the Presbyterian steeple provided the proving ground for the stream of water it could shoot--this time going 20 feet above the tip, a distance of 158½ feet.

A fire district was created by vote in 1939, making it possible for the company to purchase some of its own equipment. In 1941 the company purchased a Ford pumper, and in 1950 added the converted tanker, which has since been sold to Pennellville. A Chevrolet emergency truck was added in 1957 along with an American LaFrance truck with a 750 gallon tank and a 1000 gallon booster. The village purchased a second American LaFrance truck with a 750 gallon pumper and a 500 gallon tank in 1957.

The Protection Fire Company No. 1 became known in 1874 as the Protection Engine Company and the Wide Awake Hose Company, later called Ever Ready Hose Company. The Weed Hose Company was named for the Rev. T. A. Weed, long pastor of the Presbyterian church. The Sullivan Hose Company chose its name to honor a genial local hotel man who provided them with a length of fire hose.

Fire House Fire

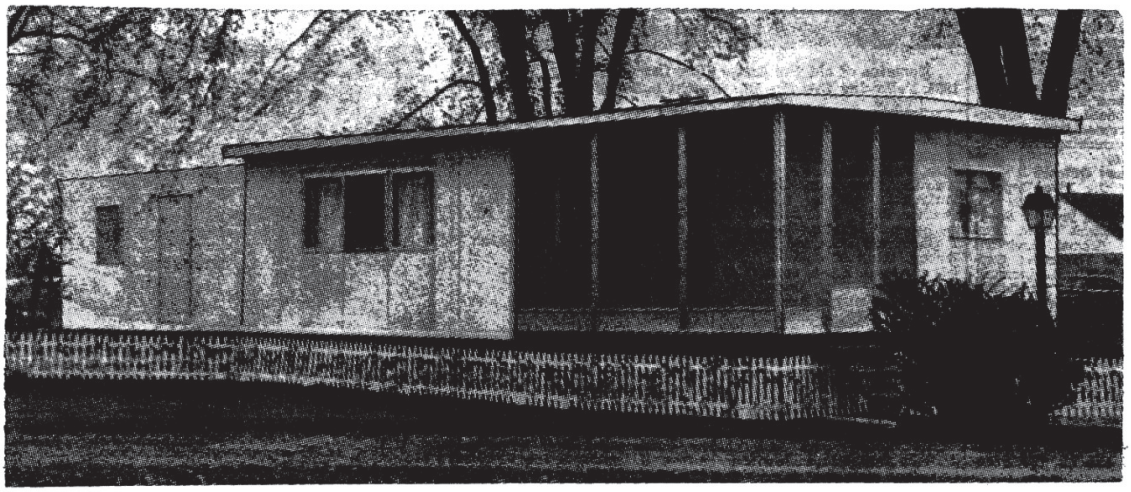
When the old fire house burned on Sunday, March 6, 1938, the Independent carried the following story: "Mexico residents were startled from

(Continued on next page)

Mexico Fire Department

Left to right: Bert Miller, Allie Gregory, Albert Bequillard, Frank L. Hoose, William H. Sherman, Mike Tully, Earl Mixer, Ernest Stone, Fred Thomas, Rueben F. Sherman and Will Foreth. Ernest Stone, the lone survivor, wasborn October 28, 1870.

One Hundred Years Of Progress. From The Covered Wagon To The Modern Mobile Home Of Today!



Now "1961" Suburban Living With All The Conveniences Of Mobility! Live Modern! Not In The Past!

HAWK SALES COMPANY

Mexico Lot **Scenic Ave.** **Mexico, N. Y.**

Harsey K. Leonard, Manager

fire siren atop the fire house on North Jefferson street screeched the warning that the old, picturesque fire station, a landmark in this village for nearly a century with its familiar 50-foot high hose drying tower, had just burst into flames.

"When the firemen arrived to fight the flames in their quarters, fire was already shooting from the rear of the building. Chief Orson Pond said the flames apparently originated from an overheated stove pipe or a defective electric wiring in the rear of the second floor.

" A high wind and snowstorm added to the difficulties of the firemen. They hastily drove the squad car and the chemical truck out of the rapidly burning building and started fighting the fire.

"Within a half-hour the firemen had the blaze under control but not before a section of the fire house roof had caved in and the attic and second floor completely wrecked. Flames spread to the adjacent Legion building which also houses the Mexico Community Library. Walls of this building are only a foot from the fire station and in a short time the flames had eaten through them and destroyed the second floor and attic. The roof of the Legion building is also destroyed and it is believed that the building will have to be torn down.

"Neither of the two company trucks was damaged. The $1000 fire siren was also undamaged and it has been placed on the roof of Leepy's store from where it will sound in case of fire. Both fire trucks are being housed in the Catholic gymnasium temporarily.

"Familiar to every Mexico resident, the origin of the building dates further than the memory of the oldest resident in the village. No one seems to know in what year the building was erected. Village records do not mention its construction. Charles Fellow, 88, the oldest fireman in the village, says the company building has stood on the present site as long as he can remember. Mr. Fellows places the age of the building at nearly a hundred years and says it is as old as the Lavoie home, the George Cole house, and the Burke house, three of the oldest buildings in the village."

New Hall Built

After several planning sessions with an architect ,and upon agreement with the American Legion, the two damaged structures were combined into one cement block building with asbestos shingle siding for a fire hall, Legion rooms, and village board meeting room. On Tuesday, September 20, 1938 the new fire hall was dedicated.

Harry Stone presented Fire Chief Orson Pond with a purse of $301 he had collected from willing merchants and townspeople for firemen towards purchasing of furnishings for their new quarters.

Present Officers

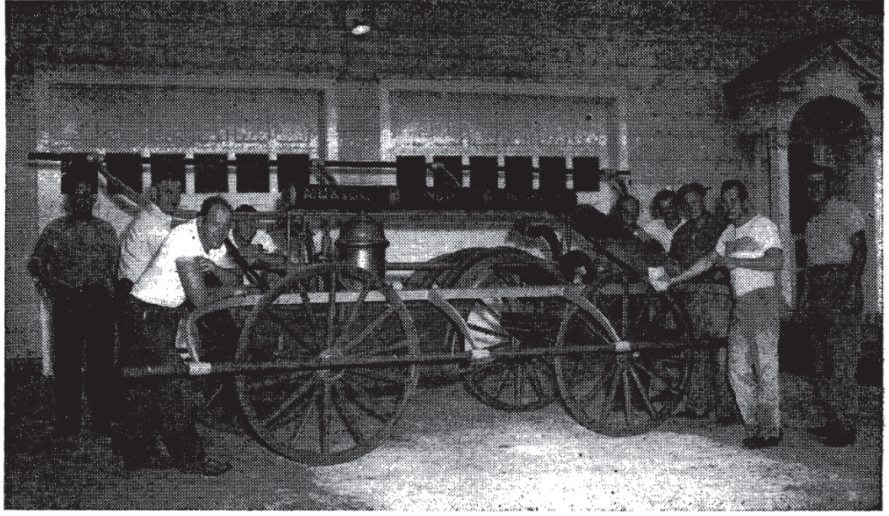
Officers of the Fire Department for the year 1961-'62 are as follows: Chief, Everet Backus; First Assistant Chief, Donald McFee; Second Assistant Chief, Charles Tollerton; Captain. Harold Diehl; Lieutenant, Robert Cowles; and President, James Forbes; Treasurer, John Hollister; Secretary, James New. as business officers.

Early Fires

In an article written by Honorable D. C. Peck for the Independent issue of August 8, 1867 were listed all the fires in the area from February 1801 to 1859. The total number of buildings burned was 76, with property damage estimated at about $179,000 with insurance of $88,000. "Mexico is celebrated for its fires," wrote Mr. Peck.

The account of the first fire within the present village limits gives some interesting local history.

1801-February--Dwelling occupied by Calvin Tiffany. This was a log house, and first building ever erected within our present village limits, and the first ever consumed by fire. Nearly all traces of its location are now obliterated. This house has a history. About 1795 George Scriba commenced the settlement of Vera Cruz, now known as Mexico Point. The entire region from the mouth of Salmon Creek, back as far as Texas, was laid out into city lots. Mills, houses and stores were put up. Gordon's Gazateer says that at one time more goods were sold there than at Oswego or Utica.



This engine was first used in 1861 when a fire at A. Thomas' store burned It continued in use until 1887. It still makes an appearance in parades.

Scriba cut a highway through the forest from Vera Cruz to Constantia on Oneida Lake. It passed in a north easterly direction over the east hill of this village. On this road and on a little clearing (the first made in the village) at a point about a half mile northeast of the depot, and about 30 rods east of Richard Hamilton's residence, stood the house alluded to. It was known as the "Gafford place."

House Had History

Around that log house cluster many historical events of much interest. Here it was that Nathaniel Rood, the earliest white settler in our present corporation, first resided. He came to town in 1798 with Jonothan Parkhurst. It is uncertain whether Rood or Scriba built the house. Parkhurst settled on a place now occupied by Mr. Jenney, south of Colosse.

There were a few settlers in town before they came, but most of the names are lost. In February, 1799, Phineas Davis and Calvin Tiffany came and rented this house of Rood, and jointly occupied it. This was two years prior to the arrival of John Morton and Asa Davis, and five or six years before Leonard Ames, S. Peck, P. Brown, and S. Hosmer came.

This house was one of Scriba's renting places when traveling between his two cities. Some public meetings were held in it. Here it was that Truman Rood, of Colosse, was born, Aug. 10, 1799---the first birth in town. Here, too, the first bride and groom of the town---Mrs. Rood and R. Gafford spent their honeymoon and commenced housekeeping.

Mr. Davis soon moved into his house, which he erected near where his son now resides, leaving Tiffany in the Rood house.

One day, when Mr. Tiffany was absent, a spark flew from the fireplace up into some tow overhead, which was soon ablaze. The hired man was too much frightened to put it out, and the building soon burned down. Nearly everything was got out of the house except a barrel of flour, which was brought from Whitestown. This was quite a loss, as at that time the nearest flour markets were Sackets Harbor and Whitestown.

There was no cry of, "Fire!" at this our introductory burning. No alarm bell rung---no engine, hose cart, hooks, ladders, buckets or bystanders appeared at that scene. It is needless to state there was no insurance. There was no noise except, perhaps, the howling of the wild beasts at such an unusual sight. Mrs. Tiffany, her child (Rufus) and the hired man were the only witnesses of this fire. To be burned out of even a log house was no laughing matter.

Houseless and homeless, Mrs. Tiffany with her child in her arms, found her way to Mr. Davis's and broke to them the news, and there the Tiffany family remained on until Mr. T. put up another house on the site of the one burned down. Here he lived a while, and then moved to the place east of the burying ground (Primitive Cemetery) where he so long resided.

Early Buildings

1807--Dwelling owned by Richard Gafford. This house stood upon the same ground as the Rood house last described, and was built by Tiffany. Mr. Gafford and family were visiting at James Tuller's, and on returning home found their house in ashes. A heap of corn was smoking among the ruins. Nothing was saved. The forest was so dense no one saw the smoke. It was supposed to have caughte from a bark log which was left burning in the fireplace.

The next log house on the Gafford place stood near R. Hamilton's stone house. The disaster on the lake had a discouraging effect upon the settlement. Where the village now is, the forest was almost unbroken. Bears, wolves, and panthers still held their ground. Dear skipped among the trees, and the streams were filled with salmon and trout. A few clearings had been made.

James Tuller, father of Simon Tuller, had previously put up a log house near where Eldad Smith now resides, which was the first dwelling erected between the two creeks. John Morton had put up a house on east hill, and built a saw mill in 1804 near Goit's saw mill. A few years after, he rigged up a small grist mill in one corner of the saw mill.

The first framed dwelling in the village was put up this year (1807) by S. Alfred, and is still standing as the wing of A. N. Alfred's house. (The house on West Main owned by Mr. and Mrs. Harry Arthur.) A year later the Free Masons held a meeting there. Leonard Ames was at this time living near the Cheese Factory.

More Buildings

1809--Dwelling owned by John Ames. Stood near A. Lawrence's place. Log house and no

(Continued on next page)

Fire Hits Home

Remains of old fire house after fire on Sunday, March 6, 1938. Following this fire the present building was erected.

Congratulations To

The Mexico Independent

On Its 100th Birthday

1861 1961

How Times Have Changed

A far cry from the old fashioned "general store" is the Mexico Corner Store

OPEN 7 DAYS 8 to 10

Complete Stock of

GROCERIES

MEATS

MEXICO CORNER STORE

Main Street

Mexico, New York

Mexico Fire Department, 1903

Top row. left to right: James Tryon, Frank Smedley, Fred Stewart, Jasper D. Coe, Ethan Burdick, Elliott Pettingill, and Charles Fellers.

Middle row: Daniel Wyant, William H. Sherman, Claude A. Pettingill, Anson J. Helleck, Thomas Pepper, Gates Minckler, Chief; and Moses Preman

Front row: Ward B. Castle (only survivor, 1961) Oakes Ames, Cortland Davis, William Elkins and Milton Lamphier.

tried to fire that.

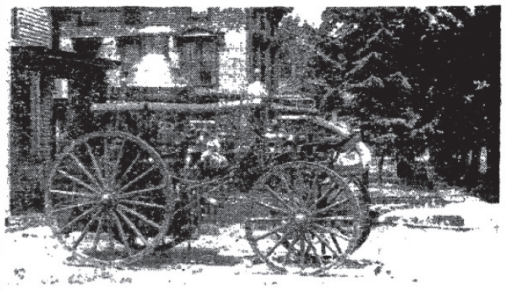
August 26, 1852--Three stores standing where the Webb Block now stands, were destroyed by fire, which commenced in or near an ice house in the rear of the large building. Judge Whitney owned the three story building, Henry Webb the brick store, and W. H. and E. Rullson the Drug Store. O. H. Whitney, Whitney and Skinner, S. Kennedy, Odd Fellows, Peck and Conklin, H. Webb, William Webb, J. G. Allen, J. Blakeslee and others were losers. Loss about $15,000.

Great Disaster

1864--Great Conflagration--This was the most alarming and destructive of our fires; almost one half of the business district of the town was laid in ashes. A severe drouth was prevailling at the time. The Mexico Hotel, Whitney Block, Snell Block, Post Office and twelve other buildings were destroyed. Everything was burned off on the south side of Main St. from Dr. Snell's present residence, down to Water St. (Lincoln Ave.), and also two dwellings on east hill.

(Continued on next page)

Silsby Steam Engine



Bought in 1887 this engine could put a stream of water far over the Presbyterian Church steeple. A standing offer of $5 to the first team at the barn made for some exciting races when the bell rang.

FIRE DEPT. CONT.

insurance. About the year 1811-12 the second framed dwelling was erected in the village by Capt. Murdock, who kept a tavern in it. It was the old house on the corner west from the Mayo House and occupied so long by R. A. Butler. (Mayo House later became the Mexico Hotel). It burned in 1854. In 1812 Matthias Whitney put up the third framed house near where the ball alley now stands. The fourth framed house was erected by Phineas Davis in 1815.

Mr. Fitch opened the first store in this vicinity in 1812. It stood near Tiffany's place, beyond the east burying ground. The store was afterwards moved over here, and is now occupied as a dwelling. It stands a few feet north east of the Toronto Mills (about where the village garage now stands).

About the same time the Post Office was kept at Tiffany's, and a school was opened in his barn. Judge Pratt had previously opened a store at Prattville, where a distillery and ashery, owned by Pratt, Brewster and Hosmer were in full blast. Fitch commenced selling goods in the village in 1814.

Serious Fire

1823--A distillery, owned by Simon Tuller and Lucius Webb, and located on the east side of the road, near Anson Gustin's house, (somewhere in the area of Bob Putnam's cider mill (?) was about this time destroyed. It occurred at night and its origin was mysterious. This loss was severely felt by the early settlers, as the distillery was about their only market for grain. At this time when this burnt, a large proportion of our present corporation was still wilderness.

The first framed meeting house in the county was erected this year, and now stands in Colosse.

Fox Story

1824--Two houses were burned down about this time on the same day, and under circumstances which created much merriment. Mr. Fox was living in a log house near Daniel Austin's residence on the railroad. The Fox family bore a bad name, and they were not liked. He concluded to leave the place, and hired a house which stood in Dr. Snell's orchard south of J. R. Stone's place.

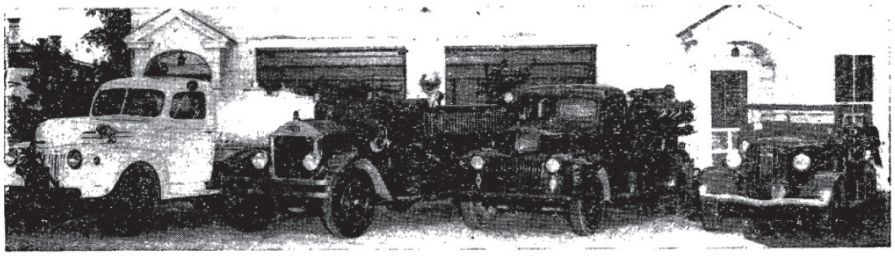
Fox packed up and started, and on reaching his new home found the house in flames. Without unloading, he retraced his steps and reached his former home just in time to see that burn down. Fox folded his arms and, like Napoleon, gazed long and thoughtfully upon the burning Moscow. He finally fixed a place to stay under a tree, and afterwards agreed to leave the country if some one would take his family to the Oswego River. The offer was accepted and Fox shook the dust of Mexico from his feet.

It is supposed that neighbors fired both of these houses in order to give Fox a gentle hint that he was not wanted here. The affair was always styled "smoking out the foxes." The loss was two large Foxes and some small ones.

Church Burns

1850--Methodist church and sheds, two stores, and L. Downing's barn burned at 3 p. m. One store was owned by J. A. Fort and one by A. Lawrence. These buildings stood between Richard's ware rooms and Dr. Snell's residence. This fire was set in the unfinished store of Mr. Fort, by a little girl, aged about 14, who was living with

The Line-Up In Front of New Fire Hall, 1956



Tanker — Village Truck — Company Truck — Squad Car

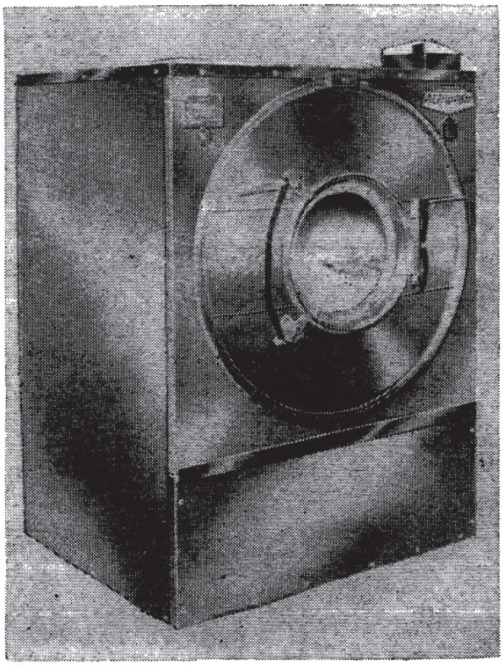
BIGGEST ADVANCEMENT IN 100 YEARS!

Now you can dryclean your own clothes - - - -

Wash and dry your clothes without purchasing your own machines - -

Wash your own shag rugs, bedspreads, blankets, drapes, etc., with our new 25 - pound capacity washer - extractor - - -

All these modern conveniences for just a few pennies!



This is a picture of our new 25 pound capacity washer (we have two)

We have 2 coin-operated Drycleaners. Each holds 8 pounds of clothing.

We have 20 coin - operated washers.

We have 9 extra large dryers.

GIOVO'S LAUNDER-EASE

Coffee - Ice Cream - Cigars - Candy

Main Street — **Mexico, N. Y.**

Fire Department in 1935

The officers in 1935 were: Chief of the department, Luke S. Clearwater. Ray E. Dailey, assistant chief; Harry C. Vorce, treasurer; Lawrence M. Bateman, secretary; The hose foreman was John Humbert, assistant hose foreman was Fred Kellogg, Jr. Truck drivers were Lawrence M. Bateman, Glenn A. Buck and John Lum.

Other members of the department were Earl C. Parker, Arden Kio, Orson Pond, Ralph Walton, Roy Wilcox, Barzel Lawrence, Carl Brown, Glen Walton, Elmer Jencks, James Morrow, Carl Felt and Floyd Badger. The little chap sitting on the mudguard of the engine is Donald Halstead.

Independent Block Misses Destruction By Minutes

Thursday, May 7, 1931:—

One spring morning in 1931 the Independent nearly ended its existence. The story is from its pages.

Flames, bursting forth early Sunday morning from the Independent Press Building, resulted in considerable damage before the fire was brought under control. The buildings located in East Main street, between Church street and South Jefferson street, is owned by R. Austin Backus, editor and publisher of the Mexico Independent. The printing plant occupies the upper floor. The lower floor on the west side was leased by Edward Parker as a plumbing establishment, while the east side was occupied by Ethan Burdick as a grocery store. The building is of brick construction. The printing plant and machines were badly damaged, requiring considerable amount of repairs before the presses and linotype machine can be put in running order. The contents of both stores on the lower floor were ruined. The total loss is estimated about $11,000.

E. E. Hollister Gives Alarm

The fire was discovered by Elmer E. Hollister at about five o'clock. Mr. Hollister had arisen early and was on the way to his insurance office for a book which he wished to use, when he noticed smoke pouring out of the front entrance way to the building. Investigation showed the building to be in flames. Mr. Hollister rushed to the fire engine house near by to give the alarm. The electric siren happened to be out of order, but he was able to sound a bell alarm. Miss Mary Boyd, chief operator at the telephone office, also spread the alarm and the town hall bell was rung. Meanwhile several autos were dispatched to bring the firemen to the scene of the fire. But for this prompt action the whole block of buildings might have been burned to the ground. The firemen did splendid work. The fire was a stubborn one, but after about two hours of hard work it was brought under control. Both Pulaski and Parish offered to send help. Myrna Fellows made a record run to Pulaski by auto and secured a gas mask. The Parish department sent over their engine and eight men, but happily their services were not required.

Wind Hinders

A strong northwest wind was blowing which was threatening at times, but the flames were kept confined to the Independent block. However, considerable damage by smoke and water was done to the stock in S. J. Ramsey's Department store on the east, and to the Market Basket store on the west. The Independent Press also occupies the upper floor of the Brown block over the Market Basket store. This section was greatly protected by the fire wall and heavy fire doors. The fire is believed to have started in the basement working its way up through a partition and to the roof of the building.

The entire stock of printing paper is a total loss.

Mrs. Ray Greff furnished coffee and rolls for the firemen.

The Independent block is the old Henry Humphries property and was built by him about the year 1865.* Mr. Backus bought the property in December, 1924.

(*Later evidence shows that the building was originally called the Pruyne Block and the office probably bought by Mr. Humphries.)

FIRE DEPT. CONT.

The fire broke out about 3 p. m. in Snell and Huntington's Drug Store. A boy was drawing naptha, which accidentally got on fire and spread with the most alarming rapidity. This conflagration was to Mexico what the Great Fire in 1835 was to New York.

The following were the sufferers: Snell and Huntington, J. J. Parkhurst, J. Y. Smith, L. D. Smith, Dr. Huntington, J. Didier, Stone and Tuller, J. J. Lamoree, James Failey, J. Jackson, M. Youngs, J. N. Holmes, Whitney and Skinner, D. W. C. Peck, Drake and Mitchell, J. Blakeslee, R. A. Butler, Mrs. Firth, E. Beckard, J. B. Taylor, J. B. Driggs, J. W. Chandler, E. Cole, N. Herbert, Taylor and Barritt, W. Penfield, C. Tickner, J. Simons, E. D. Goit, F. Goff, D. Morse, Humphries and Scarrit, H. Webb, S. Clark, A. Thomas, H. T. Butler, R. Howard and others. Entire loss about $70,000.

Famous Landmark Goes Up In Smoke As Fire Destroys Old Mexico Hotel

November 4, 1937:—

The first regular hotel in Mexico village was erected on the site of the Mexico House by Mathias Whitney in 1823, and was succeeded by a better building which was burned July 22, 1864, while being conducted by Albin Meyers.

At the peak of its glory during days of stage coaches, Mexico hotel was one of the principal stopping places on the Watertown - Oswego post road. Mail carriers between the two villages would dash up to the hotel on horse back, change horses and clatter off again, down the road.

Previous to Albin Meyers, the landlords were A. S. Chamberlain, Chamberlain and Robbins, and J. B. Taylor. The hotel was rebuilt in 1865 and reopened by Ira Biddlecome, who in 1866 was followed by J. B. Davis.

In January 1867, it passed into the hands of C. S. Mayo, whose name it bore for several years.

The appearance of the hotel was much different in those days, long covered porches running around both the upper and lower stories.

Landlords changed rapidly after Mayo left the hotel and some of their names have been forgotten in the long years which followed.

Mr. William Sherman recalls that James "Jim" Sullivan was proprietor of the hotel during its most prosperous period, 52 years ago. The Mexico Fire Company had just been reorganized at the time and had bought a new steamer engine.

Hotel which stood where Sinclair gas station now does, burned in 1937.

Because Sullivan contributed to the fund raised by the Firemen, one of the hoses was named after him.

The livery stable which once stood between the hotel and Town Hall have been torn down for 20 or more years.

Benjamin Nobles bought out Sullivan after the latter had operated the hotel for 15 years. Gantley sold the business to Ward See, the most recent proprietor of the much bought-and-sold hostelery. The building has not been operated as a hotel for the past 15 or 20 years.

For the past 10 years the building has been operated as a filling station, formerly by Anson McNett, manager for Fay Adams. The Sinclair Oil Refining Company bought the building in 1931 from Fay Adams and leased it to Harold Fish. Recently the station has been in charge of Charles Vault.

The above account was written by Mrs. Frank Munson and Miss Ida Patten and appeared in the Independent at the time of the fire which destroyed the building Sunday, Oct. 31, 1937.

Mayor Makes Plea For Firemen

January 8, 1931:—

HAVE YOU NO CONSIDERATION FOR OUR FIREMEN?

Did you ever stop to consider what it means to sound a false fire alarm? What would you think of a person, for amusement, to make himself ridiculous and have so little consideration for his neighbors as to rush out into the street shouting, "Fire!" without cause? You would be justified in considering him a hoodlum, a fool, or crazy. Your devout wish would be that some time such a person's property would take fire and after repeated alarms had been sounded no firemen would respond to his frantic calls.

The firemen are industrious, self-sacrificing men, willing to leave their warm beds anytime of night, or throw down their tools and cease their work anytime of day to work out in the cold, in wet or frozen clothing, and even to endanger their lives to fight your or my fire without pay.

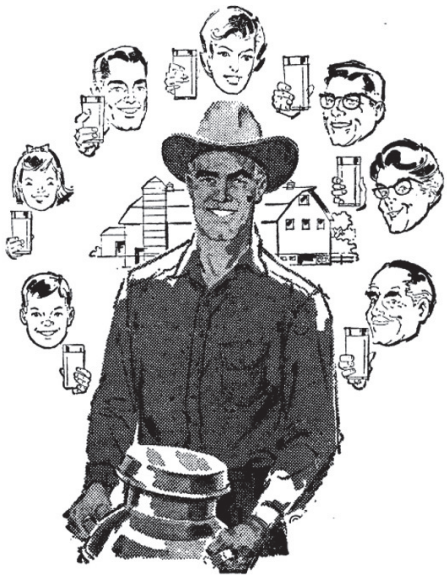
The village board has furnished the firemen with a new $6,000 fire fighting equipment, and spent $500 in a new hot water heating plant, that they might have comfortable recreation rooms; for all of which the firemen have manifested their appreciation.

Now, if the hoodlums about this town persist in calling these men unnecessarily we will see that they are placed where the board, room and laundry are free, and their amusement will be other than sending in false fire alarms.

E. A. Mowry
Mayor

The Equipment in Action

Twelve streams of water flow as two pumpers build up pressure.



CONGRATULATIONS TO

the

MEXICO INDEPENDENT

celebrating

100 Years of

Community Progress

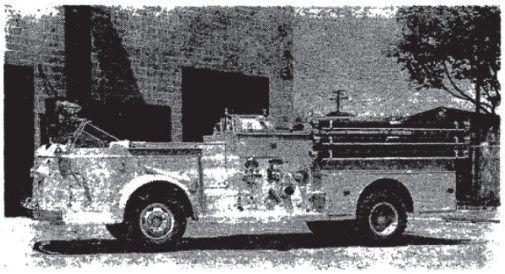
BORDEN'S FARM PRODUCTS

Mexico, N. Y.

Division of the

BORDEN CO.

New Village Truck



In 1957 the village purchased this deluxe American La France 750 gallon pumper to replace the 1926 pumper. The addition of this truck gave Mexico one of the best equipped department in the County.

New Editor Praises Founder Of Paper

TRIBUTE TO HUMPHRIES:

Editorial taken from the Mexico Independent of Thursday, March 21, 1935, the 75th anniversary edition of the paper. Edwin M. Huestis, Associate Editor.

It was the privilege and honor of the editor to have known intimately his two predecessors, the late Henry Humphries and Ernest A. Blair.

Henry Humphries was a leader in his day, a champion of the right. He had plenty of ability as a writer and editor, was an able, simple, and interesting talker, a man of his time, small one of the contributors this week has said, always donning a shawl instead of an overcoat, at the first sign of cold weather, and continuing to wear it until spring. Most frequently he could be picked from a crowd by the flower in his buttonhole, and I notice the cut we are using of him this week shows that he then had the flower in his button-hole. What a man he was--over 50 years superintendent of the Presbyterian Sunday School. I have heard that he spent his Sunday afternoons preaching in nearby district schools; that he was not afraid to denounce evil even though it might cost him some business from his print shop and newspaper. All of you who knew him can still picture him as he told a story in an address, rushing down between the aisles waving his pocket handkerchief and shouting at the top of his voice.

He was a native of England, loved to return, as he often did, many times. I have understood he crossed the ocean some thirty times, and well remember the last time I saw him, when he said, "My boy, I am going back to England to die, and be buried in the soil of my native land; and there his body rests today, far from the print shop where he labored for some 60 years, far from his old friend Frank Elkins, who now resides with his daughter at Bath, N. Y., far from the church and the village which he served so faithfully for so many years. But his influence, his ideals, his teachings will live on.

In an editorial at the time of the 55th birthday of the Independent, Mr. Humphries relates the following: "The Independent has passed another milestone, and this first issue was just before the bombardment of Fort Sumter. It was a time of great excitement throughout the land, and union meetings were held in almost every town in the state. The first meeting of the kind here, if we are not mistaken, was held in an orchard near the Ames' Mills, and the late Homer Ames invited us to go. It was largely attended and of the deepest interest. The speakers were Alva Kellogg, Hiram Independent."

Although born at Andover, N. Y., educated there and finally a school teacher at several places about the state, among them a school north of Saratoga Springs, Ernest A. Blair, the editor who succeeded Henry Humphries, had prior to his acquiring The Independent, worked in Mexico. He liked the town, and its people, and for this reason assumed the publication of this paper . . . he was a nobel character, religious, of strong ideals, and carried on with poor health to contend with for a few short years, when serious sickness made it necessary for him to dispose of the paper.

Thus since that time for ten years the writer has endeavored with the cooperation of an able staff, to whom much of the credit must go for placing in your hands each week your copy of the Independent to carry on. We, too, have tried to catch the torch from the hands of editors who have gone before, the torch that would keep the standards of the home town paper high, free from the recording of news that might wound the heart of a mother, father, sister, or sweetheart, free from the advertisements of liquor, or even cigarettes. A clean newspaper, one that the boys and girls may read, enjoy, profit from, but in which only the news that is fit to read and fit to print finds its way. This newspaper will continue to champion the causes of right, to stand for those things that are upbuilding, to follow the path made by the founder of the Independent, cut so deep in the rocks that even time, with all its changes, cannot erase.

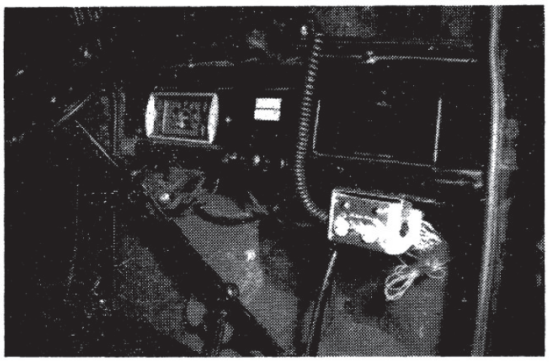
Fire Delays Paper

May 7, 1931:—

Owing to the fire of Sunday, which disorganized the plant of the Independent Press, this issue of the paper has been published under a severe handicap, but thanks to our good friends and fellow publishers, Mr. E. Earle McChesney, of the Pulaski Democrat, and Mr. Edwin M. Waterbury, of the Oswego Palladium-Times, we were able to send out the usual weekly issue of the Independent, although late. Through the courtesy of these men, the type for this edition was set in the Palladium-Times plant and the paper was printed on the press at the Pulaski Democrat office. Other plants, including the Morrill Press at Fulton and the Corse Press at Sandy Creek very kindly offered their equipment to aid in getting out this issue, also in the production of the commercial printing. The publishers of the Independent accepted these offers and are duly grateful to the above named firms for their thoughtful kindnesses.

While we have no desire to repay under like circumstances, still we hope it may be our privilege to serve these good neighbors of ours in some other way in the future.

View of Mutual Aid Radio Equipment



When Mexico united with the County-wide Mutual Aid System, radios were installed in trucks.

—Honored—

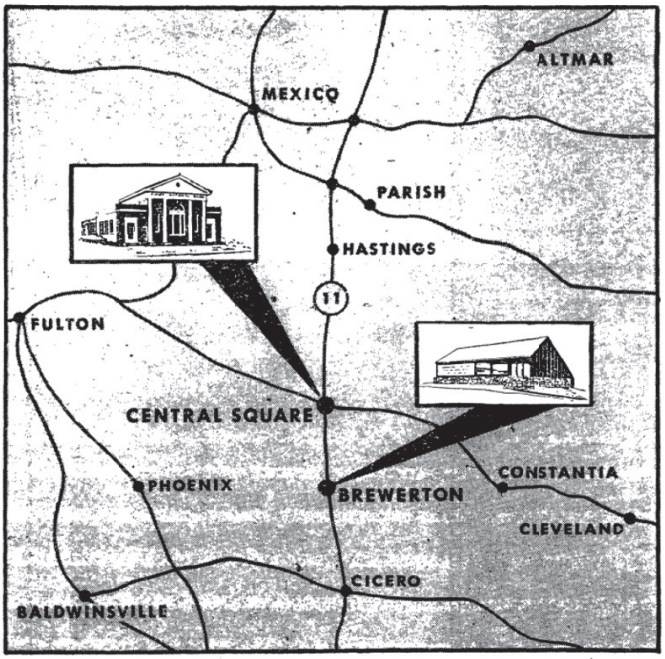
Donald Babcock for whom firemen's field is named.

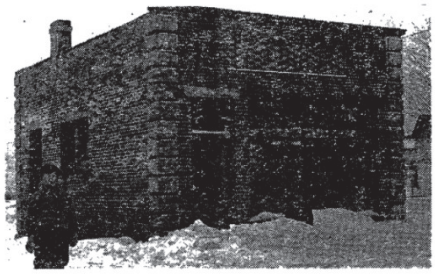
MASONIC ORCHESTRA:

October 1, 1931:—

On this Thursday evening the local Masonic Orchestra, the members of which are: F. Hoyt Hollister, Dr. A. W. Burgess, George N. Kellogg, Glenn A. Buck and Myrna C. Fellows will be in Pulaski to furnish music at the third quarterly Masonic Institute.

Congratulations To A 100 Year Oldster From A 50 Year Oldster





Our bank 50 years ago . . .

Pictured on the left is a map of the area we service and the two modern banks that help you with all your financial needs.

Our Banking Services

- Checking Accounts (many varieties)
- Saving Accounts • Business Loans
- Auto Loans • Personal Loans
- Safe Deposit • Home Imp't Loans
- Travel Checks • Home Loans

BANKING is a HELPFUL BUSINESS

The business of banking is to help other businesses—and indivduals—achieve worthwhile objectives.

To a business, this may mean the financing of receivables a loan for materials or equipment, even a bank administered pension plan.

To an individual, this may mean the convenience of a checking account, a safe and renumerative place for surplus funds, a personal loan to meet an emergency, a low-cost auto or home improvement loan.

FIRST NATIONAL BANK

OF

CENTRAL SQUARE, N. Y.

OFFICES

BREWERTON — CENTRAL SQUARE

For D.A.R. Chapter Here

SILAS TOWN CHAPTER D. A. R.

Mrs. Clara Woodbury Davis was a charter member of Ontario Chapter, Pulaski, organized in 1904. In 1905 she was appointed by the state regent to organize a chapter in Mexico. In May, 1905, fourteen ladies gathered at her home to be the beginning of DAR in Mexico.

The original fourteen were: regent, Mrs. Clara Woodbury Davis; vice regent, Mrs. Martha Robbins; recording secretary, Mrs. Hattie Munson; corresponding secretary, Mrs. Nellie Peck; treasurer, Mrs. Florence Hart; registrar, Mrs. Lillian Osborn; historian, Mrs. Robert Baker; chaplain, Mrs. Ella Baker; board of management, Mrs. Jessie Ames, Mrs. Eva Gray; program committee, Mrs. Florence Babcock, Mrs. R. C. Robertson, Parish; Mrs. Lattimer, Orwell; Mrs. Julia Ure, Vermillion. The only three who did not have an office were three out of town members, a fact to be considered in 1905. During the first year were added: Mrs. Lillian Mathewson, Mrs. Mary Martwell, Mrs. Mary Hare, Misses Effie and Anna Berry, Mrs. Alice Berry Pierce, Mrs. Addie France, Mrs. Della Hollister, Mrs. Eugenia Graves, making 22 in all.

The following are the minutes of the regular meeting Sept. 28, 1906: "A very pleasant afternoon was spent Friday, Sept. 28th when Silas Town Chapter entertained Ontario Chapter to a six o'clock luncheon in Masonic Hall. The rooms looked very lovely in their decorations of white flowers and cannas. The meeting was called to order about 4:30 p. m. (Our guests arriving on the 4:00 p. m. train) by the regent, Mrs. G. A. Davis.

"Singing, 'America,' 'The Lord's Prayer' in unison. Secretary's report and roll call. Essay 'Forts at Oswego' Miss Edith Munson. This was one of the essays for which a prize was offered by Silas Town Chapter last year. (Mrs. Frederick G. Whitney of Pulaski acted as judge.) It was a brief history of the "Forts of Oswego" from 1827 to the present time. Singing: 'Battle Hymn of the Republic.' Mrs. Peck recited very beautifully 'Elizabeth Zain' and I believe we all felt it a privilege to be called 'Daughters' of Revolutionary times.

"Duet 'The Beautiful Flag of Freedom,' Mrs. W. J. Collins and Miss Anna Bard. After singing our regent's favorite 'Blest Be the Tie' the company repaired to the dining room which was decorated with the National colors and white asters. The place cards were pictures of Silas Town monument on Spy Island. Miss Fannie Johnson discoursed sweet music during the luncheon hour.

"After dinner remarks were happily made by Miss Sarah Wood, regent, Ontario Chapter; Mrs. H. B. Clark and Mrs. H. J. Brown, past regents of Ontario Chapter; Mrs. Ruth Clark and Mrs. Frank Betts. Mrs. Ruth Clark favored us with a recitation committed sixty-seven years ago. Following adjournment to the parlors a social hour was enjoyed.

"Our guests departed for Pulaski on the seven o'clock train, after expressing their visit and our hearts were made happy for the friendship existing between the two chapters.

"Hattie Howard Munson,
Rec. Secretary."

Mrs. Davis passed away April 16, 1907.

The chapter enjoyed singing four or five songs at each meeting. Many of their early programs were of New York State and its Revolutionary history. They worked continuously to locate the graves of the revolutionary veterans.

Golden Anniversary

On May 5, 1955, Silas Town Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, observed their golden anniversary at 6:30 p. m. in the Wilcox Memorial House. The occasion marked the fiftieth anniversary of the chapter named in honor of Silas Town, a Revolutionary spy, who died in 1806 and was buried on an island near the mouth of Salmon River. Later, in 1871, on the island, a monument was erected to his memory.

A reception was held Thursday afternoon and later a dinner was served. A processional of state officers and visiting regents was led by the regent, Mrs. Allen C. Rynearson and vice regent, Mrs. Charles D. Partrick. The state officers present included Mrs. Ivan T. Johnson of White Plains, consulting registrar; Mrs. Lyle Howland of Rome, corresponding secretary; Miss Alice K. McBride, of Syracuse, treasurer; Mrs. Lynn Morgan, Pulaski, state director; Mrs. Charles Wells of Syracuse, chairman of New York State Fair; Miss Alice Carnrite of Sandy Creek, vice chairman of press relations.

The County Regents present were: Mrs. Sherman Lacey, Ontario Chapter, Pulaski; Mrs. Harry M. Stacy, Fort Ontario, Oswego; Miss Nannette Hamer, Rhadamant, Sandy Creek; Mrs. Harold Dann, Kayendatsyona, Fulton; also Mrs. Daniel Julton, General Asa Danforth; and Mrs. George Edgar of Comfort Tyler, both of Syracuse.

The four-tiered anniversary cake, placed on the speakers' table, was cut by Mrs. Lillian Osborne of Harlingen, Texas, who flew here to attend the anniversary. Mrs. Osborne is the only living charter member.

Past Regents, Mrs. R. Austin Backus, Mrs. Earl C. Dexter, Mrs. Mattison W. Hollister, Mrs. F. Hoyt Hollister, Mrs. Ray E. Davis, Mrs. George H. White, Mrs. Arthur E. Moore, Mrs. Floyd H. Kenyon and Mrs. Leland J. Druce were table hostesses.

Mrs. Osborne spoke in tribute on the life and character of her friend, the organizing regent, Mrs. George Davis. She presented a gift to Silas Town Chapter of one dollar for each year of its existence in memory of Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. Ivan Johnson, New York State Consulting Registrar, was the speaker in the absence of Mrs. Harold Erb, State Regent.

Mrs. Charles Partrick and Mrs. George Green were co-chairman and were assisted by Druce and Mrs. Raye E. Davis.

Told About Mr. Humphries

STORY'S STORY

Many of the stories for which Mr. Humphries was famous came straight out of actual life, and one of those stories is still memorialized in the market square of Devizes, his beloved town in Wiltshire, England. Here there is a beautifully executed stone monument just where the crossroads open out to frame the market place; on the monument appears a delicately lettered panel recalling the tragic tale of Ruth Pierce.

On a market day in the early days of the last century Ruth and two other farm girls brought their grain in to sell to the miller. When Ruth offered to take their grain with hers they were delighted, for there was much to see at the fair, clothing, fine fruit, and the boys who always seem to congregate just here. They would meet later at the market cross and share the proceeds of the sale.

It was not long before Ruth was back and the girls crowded 'round her clamoring, "Give us our money, give us our money!" and Ruth counted out a threepence into each waiting hand.

"But give us the rest", the girls cried.

"That is all the miller gave me. That's all there is."

Now the girls crowded closer, shoving and demanding, "You have more money. Give it to us."

Ruth raising her hand toward the market cross declared, "I have no more money. May God strike me dead if I am not telling the truth." And she fell dead upon the spot.

When the men came to raise her up three pennies dropped from her hand.

This story has been current in Wiltshire for many, many years and is accepted as true. Mr. Humphries with his storyteller gifts made of it something to remember for a lifetime.

Recollections

Among the characteristics which endeared Mr. Humphries to children was the fact that he was almost as small as they were. As he walked back and forth in front of the pew where the primary children sat we could look him almost straight in the eye. His short brisk steps matched ours. By a pat here and a smile there he gave us the feeling that he really wanted to communicate with us, not as grown-up to child but as if we were grown up too.

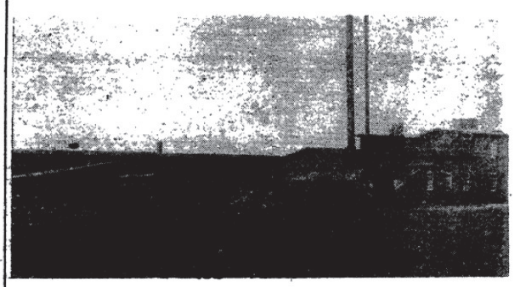
One mental photograph which I cannot date but which is less faded than many an old camera print remains in my mind. It is of this perfectly proportioned, perfectly mature small person mounted on the highest bicycle I have ever seen. Mr. Humphreys had just returned from his beloved England and had brought back this terrifying object, its enormous front wheel carrying aloft the frame for a high saddle for the rider, while a small back wheel followed along like a timid mouse. The whole contraption seemed to be on the point of tipping over and flinging its rider into the middle of the street. I can still see him mounting this spidery vehicle, then turning precariously to lift his British cycling hat to my grandmother as he moved smoothly off.

Mr. Humphries was never one to be cheated out of the full glory of a sentence. For the four years I attended college, each vacation was marked by the same news item in the Independent: "Miss Margaret Becker is enjoying a vacation from her studies at Elmira Female College for Women."

Margaret O. Becker

Humphries:

Still another picture of Mr. Humphries is included in a letter from an old resident now living in Evanston, Ill. "An exhibit of vegetables and fruits was being held in the Town Hall many years ago. Mr. Humphries held up a large pumpkin, almost as big as himself and dropped it. It broke into a thousand pieces at his feet. If you picture in your mind's eye comparing the sizes of man and pumpkin, it does appeal to one's sense of humor."



Wed. Oct. 10, 1900

George H. Wilson's canning factory in Mexico has packed about twelve hundred thousand cans of corn this season. All the cans were made here also what were used in Taberg factory; over eight hundred thousand more. The help during canning time was paid over four thousand dollars. The farmers will be paid for corn delivered at factory about fifteen thousand dollars. The corn is now being shipped, from one to two thousand cases per day. Over 200 people were employed at one time, putting out about 85,000 cans daily. The factory was built in 1888 and is now occupied by Borden Milk Co.

Interior Of Canning Factory

Interior of Wilson Canning Factory showing husking of corn. In the picture is Ida Dawley, grandmother of Ivah Cogswell.

Visitor Has Praise For Local Hotel

MEXICO HOTEL

Thursday, March, 12, 1874:— (Extract from a letter from Mr. L. A. MacIntosh, correspondent of the Episcopal Register, written in 1874.)

It (Mexico) is a thriving village, possessing much wealth, and its picturesque surroundings, beautiful drives to the great lake, and the solid and substantial character of its hotel comforts commend it strongly to those who prefer a quiet and pleasant summer abiding, rather than mere fashionable resort, where one can obtain a good large parlor and bedroom, and a model cup of coffee or tea, that from their excellence, are positively phenomenal; with everything about him neatness and cleanliness itself, and all for the unheard of amount of $2 per day, and no fashion. He certainly ought to go, if he be a reasonable man. Such are the conditions of life at the Mexico Hotel, Mexico, N. Y. Mr. Charles Mayo, proprietor and owner, I can truly reccommend his house to the traveling public.

CONGRATULATIONS

to

THE MEXICO INDEPENDENT

On Their 100th

Anniversary

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Home Baked Beans

Scenic Ave. Mexico

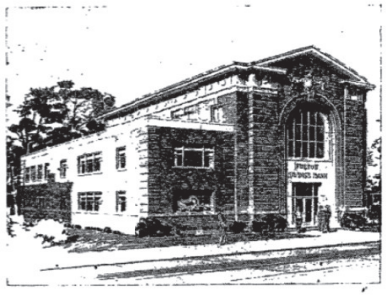
We are proud to join with our Good Neighbor and Friend in Mexico — The Mexico Independent — in Celebrating One Hundred Years of Community Progress

In our ninety years of service in Oswego County We too Have Grown and Progressed

1871
Assets $28,140

1888
Assets $271,300

1911
Assets $2,090,600



Today
Assets $21,620,000

During the past ninety years the Fulton Savings Bank has played an important part in the economic development and stabilty of Fulton and Oswego County. Thousands of homes purchased have been made possible by sound mortgage financing through this bank. Funds not needed for residential mortgages have been invested in bonds of Federal, State and Municpal Governments, and High-Grade Industrial and Utilty Securities to finance the building of roads, schools and other needed public facilites. All this has been possible because of the thrifty savings of thousands of people for which mutual savings banks exist to receive and conserve for the benefit of depositors and the general community.

This bank has kept fully abreast of modern banking developments, and now, in addition to home mortgage financing, provides these additional services:

- HOME REPAIR LOANS
- COLLEGE EDUCATION LOANS
- PASS BOOK LOANS
- SCHOOL SAVINGS PROGRAM
- SAFE DEPOSIT BOX FACILITIES
- SAVINGS BANK MONEY ORDERS
- BANKING BY MAIL
- CHRISTMAS CLUB
- TRAVELERS CHECKS

In this our 90th Anniversary year, we are happy to announce that we now pay anticipated dividends of 3½% FROM DATE OF DEPOSIT. Dividends credited and compounded quarterly. Why not start an account with us today.

FULTON SAVINGS BANK

Fulton, N. Y.

Established 1871 **Member Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.**

MANY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE LONG HISTORY

Fort Leazier House Scene Of First Meeting Of Grange

HISTORY OF MEXICO GRANGE NO. 218

County Deputy, James Lee was the organizing official when Mexico Grange came into existance on June 20, 1874 at the home of Albert Everts in the house that was known as the Jesse Dyke house, now occupied by John Schenck in Fort Leazier District.

On the night of their organization, members elected Fred Sampson as first Master and Daniel Austin as the first initial Secretary. There were nineteen charter members. After a few meetings which were held in the homes of the members, they rented a hall, upstairs, in a building in the business section on the south side of Main Street, Mexico Village. The furnishings were quite primitive, the seats being planks placed upon blocks. The hall which burned in 1894 was called Swanson Hall. The lodge hall was a large room with a platform, three feet wide and about seven or eight inches high around the room. The platform for the three Graces was still higher. The entire floor carpeted, requiring 100 yds. of carpet. This room also served as a dining room. Thirty kerosene lamps were used to light the hall. Years ago, they used to have a recess of twenty minutes when a meeting was about half through. Many social times were enjoyed. They held box socials, maple sugar parties, pumpkin pie socials and masquerade parties.

Early Records Lost

We know but little of the early history. The charter bears the date, June 20, 1874 and this is all the authentic history of Mexico Grange for the first twenty years of it's existence as the fire which destroyed the Boyd House, also destroyed all the books and furniture of the Grange.

Meetings were held in the engine hall in the afternoons for a time and in 1904, Fraternity Hall was rented of the Odd Fellows where meetings were held until the purchase of the present hall in 1924 and located on Washington Drive. This was formerly the Star Theater Building. The late Henry Barton was Master at the time.

June 20, 1931, a special meeting was held to celebrate the burning of the mortgage. In 1934, Mexico Grange became a Model Grange. Several of the members have received Silver Star Certificates and some have received the Golden Sheaf Certificates signifing 50 years of continuous membership.

There are fourteen, living Past Masters; Henry Jacobs, Walter Burdick, William Haig, Charles Sischo, John Castle, West Ackley, Ralph Schmidt, Howard McNett, Sterling Edwards Sr., Myers Babcock, Chester Chapman, Chauncey Harvey, Harold Loyst, John Burrows.

Present Staff

Eugene Burrows is the present Master. Other officers include: Overseer, West Ackley; Lecturer, Mrs. Alfred Blunt; Steward, Sterling Edwards Sr.; Assistant Steward, Richard Burrows; Chaplain, Mrs. Chauncey Harvey; Treasurer, Charles Sischo; Secretary, Mrs. Marjorie Sischo; Gatekeeper, Raymond Landphere; Ceres, Mrs. Raymond Landphere, Pomona, Nancy Mandigo; Flora, Mrs. Albert Rogers; Lady Assistant Steward, Mrs. Arlea ONeal..

There are 173 members, 52 of whom are Pomona or County Grange members. Several members have held office in Pomona Grange and the present Secretary of Mexico Grange Mrs. Marjorie Sischo, is also Secretary of Oswego County Pomona Grange. Meetings are held on the first and third Friday of each month.

The Grange cooperates with the churches and other organizations. An annual prize of ten dollars is awarded to the outstanding boy of the agricultural class and a line amount is awarded to the outstanding girl in home economics in the local school.

Mrs. Marjorie Sischo,
Secretary

GRANGE

Thursday, June 18, 1874—

A Grange--called "Mexico Grange" was organized here on the 11th inst., by Special Deputy Lee, with a full charter, and the following officers were elected: Master, Fred Sampson; Overseer, T. G. Smith; Lecturer, H. H. Tillapaugh; Steward, S. Way; Assistant Steward, E. R. Everts; Chaplain, C. P. Whipple; Treasurer, Veeder Green; Secretary, D. H. Hastings; Gatekeeper, Geo. Buck; Ceres, Mrs. D. H. Austin; Pomona, Mrs. A. O. Everts; Flora, Mrs. A. Gray; Lady Assistant Steward, Mrs. George Buck.

The local Grange is the fourteenth in the county and is allowed 30 charter members, ten ladies and 20 men. The fee for men is $5 and that for ladies is $2.

The above article appeared in the Independent and may fill in some of the detail in Mrs. Sischo's story.

July 5, 1893:—

Capt. Nelson Ames of Marshaltown, Ia., visited friends in town last week. He was one of the members of Battery G, and from here went to Gettsburg to attend ceremonies of the dedicating of the New York State monument. Among those from town, who went were Jesse Burdick, Fred Baxter, Fred Hill, Homer M. Ames and Geo. Barse, all of whom took part in the memorable fight during the rebellion.

Past Masters of Mexico Grange No. 218, 1953

Seated: John Castle, 1940; Henry Jacobs, 1926-'27; Henry Barton, 1924-'25; William Haig, 1937-'38-'41; Charles Sischo, 1939; West Ackley, 1942-'43-'44.

Standing: Myers Babcock, 1950-'53; Sterling Edwards, 1950; Chester Chapman, 1953; Chauncey Harvey, 1954; Howard McNett, 1948-49; Ralph Schmidt, 1945-'46-'47 (not in picture, Walter Burdick, 1935-'36).

1906 MODEL N FORD

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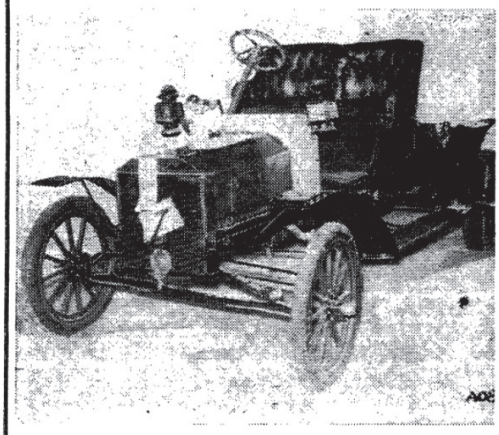

In its day the Model "N" Ford was a leader in economy and dependability. Today's Fords still lead in those fields and in addition are leaders in style, comfort, handling qualities and resale value. The 1962 Ford shown here, and on display in our showroom is no exception. Test Drive it today.

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The Day You Buy A Diamond

The day you buy a diamond for the first time may well be the day you win your future wife. That purchase, telling the triumph of your own romance, carries with it the whole romantic story of the betrothal ring.

Actually it is older than the wedding band and was once made of plaited rush, leather, or even iron or flint. A pledge ring was often given maidens pledged in marriage in tribes that did not use a ring in subsequent wedding ceremonies.

The diamond is mentioned as the jewel of brides from the fifteenth century on. Its very name (from the Greek word, Adamas, meaning unconquerable) suggests the triumph and eternity of love. The ancients called it the sunstone because of its brilliant flashes of light. Like the passion of love, it "sent forth a flame without the aid of fire."

The betrothal ring is still worn on the fourth finger because it was once believed that the Vena Amoris, or vein of love, ran from this finger directly to the heart. The English Prayer Book of 1549 specified that the marriage ring should be placed on the left hand, and the English-speaking world follows this custom, the bridegroom as well as the bride.

The engagement ring is worn on the bride's right hand when she goes to the altar because the wedding band is always placed on the ring finger of the left, next to the hand, "closest to the heart." Then the engagement solitaire is slipped on over the wedding band and becomes its keeper. In Colonial days, in fact, the engagement ring was often called the "keeper ring."

Let us help you make the right selection THE DAY YOU BUY A DIAMOND. Remember . . . A diamond is forever!

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Main Street Mexico, N. Y.

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We Supply
All Makes Kitchen Cabinets
Various Colors and Finishes
French Provincial
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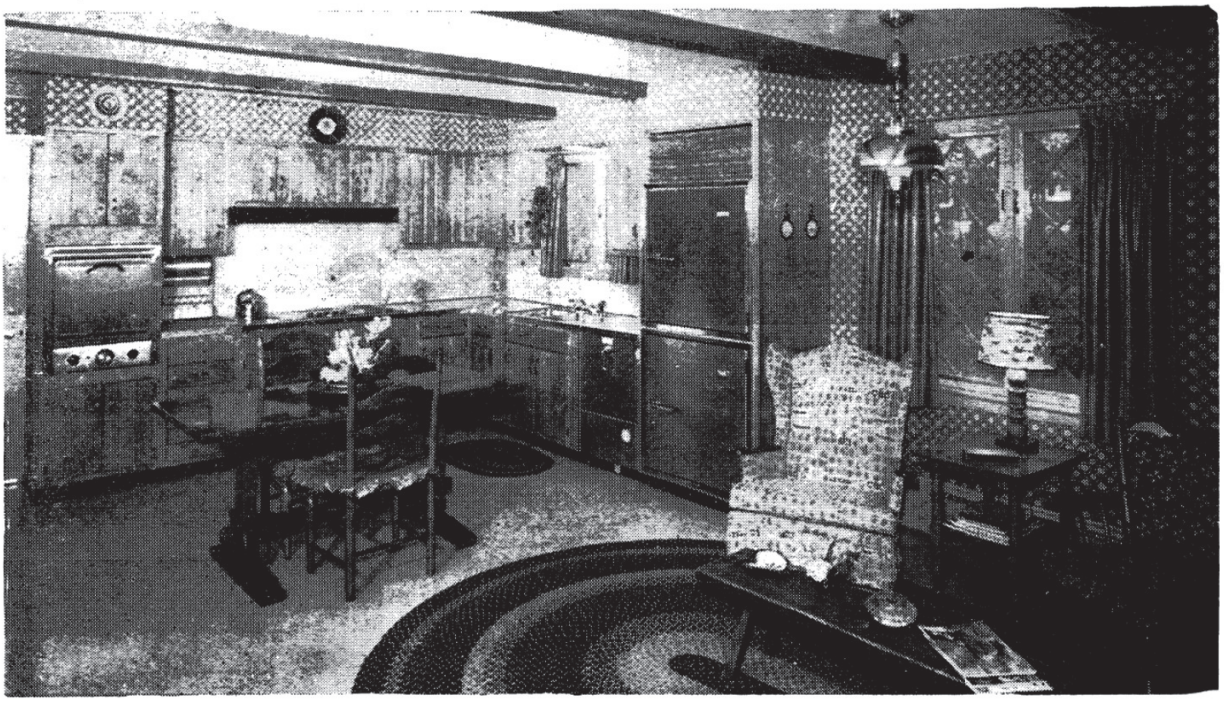

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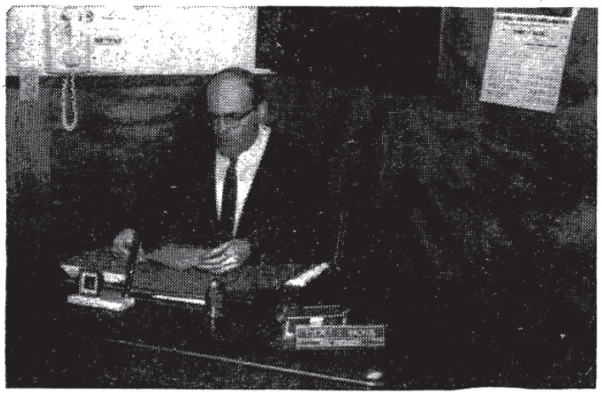

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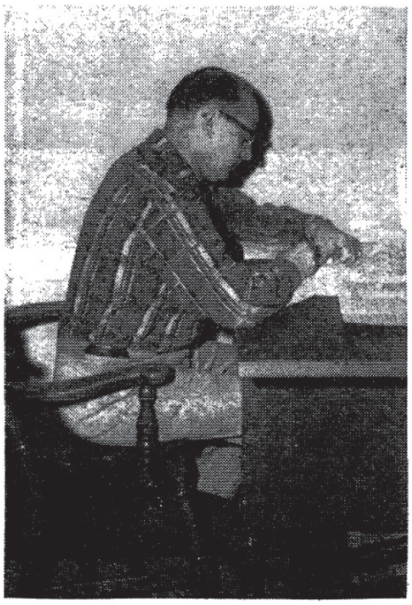

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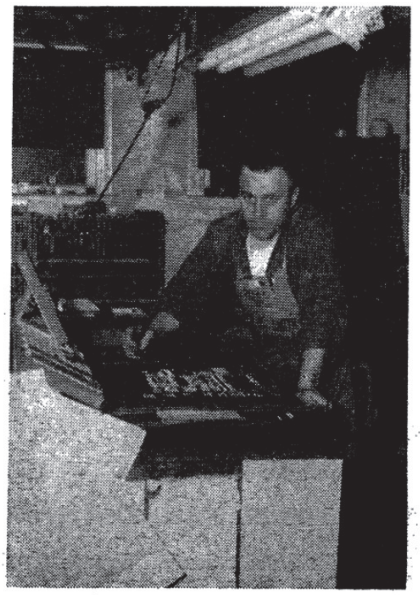

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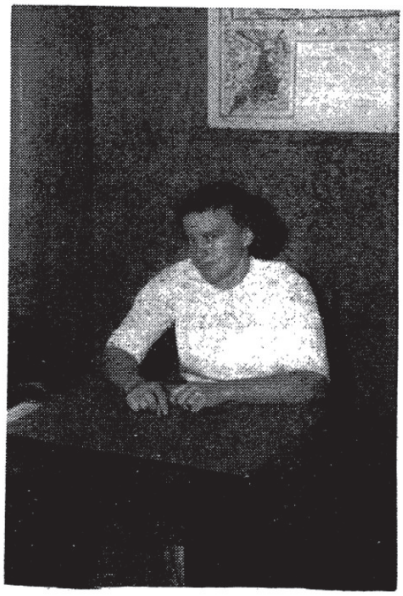

Eunice Seybold

INDEPENDENT STAFF

OFFSET PHOTOGRAPHER

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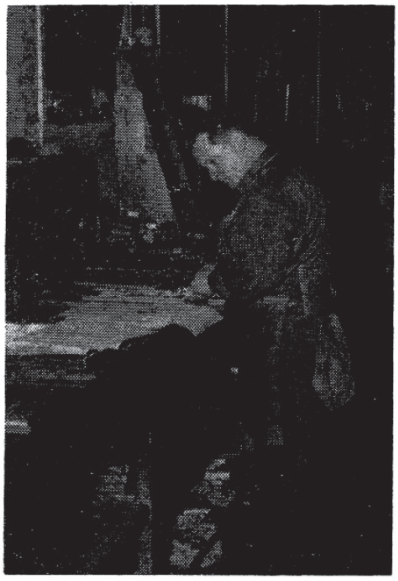

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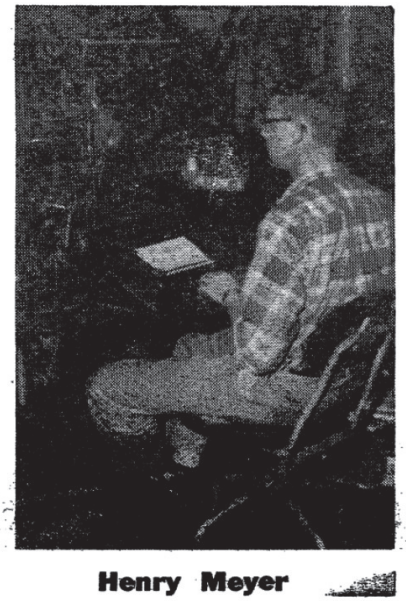

Henry Meyer

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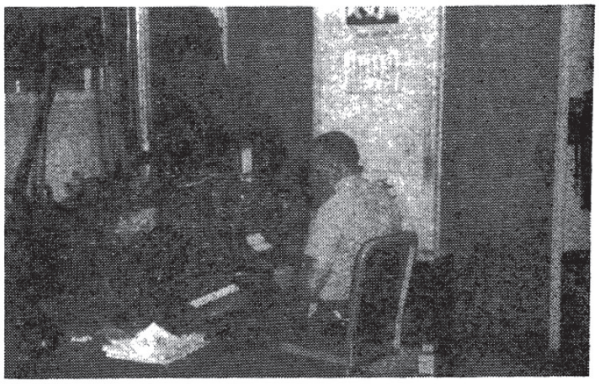

Clarence Duell

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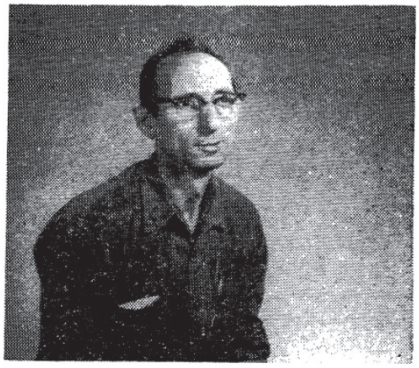

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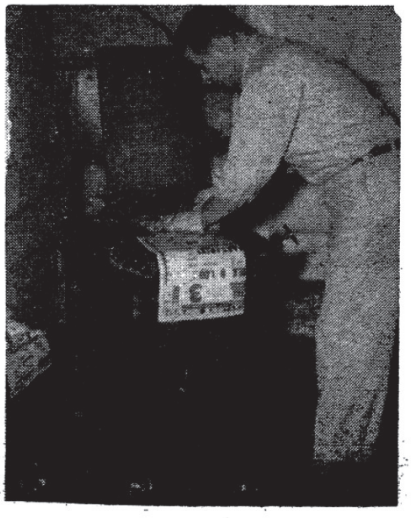


Donald McFee

Lost Records Hide Early Odd Fellow Story

ODD FELLOWS

The present lodge, Arbeit No. 168., was not the first to be known of Odd Fellowship in the village of Mexico. In 1848 on February 16, there was an Odd Fellows lodge instituted under the name of "Montezuma Lodge No. 343. Independent Order of Odd Fellows of the State of New York." How long this lodge exisited is a mystery as far as local history or the present Grand Lodge are concerned. At one time in New York State existed two Grand Lodges. One Grand Lodge was in control of the lodges in up-state and was known as Northern Grand Lodge, and the other governing body was around and in New York City. The records of the Northern Grand Lodge were destroyed, leaving no way of tracing the first Odd Fellows Lodge in the village.

First Meeting

On May 24, 1899 a meeting was held in the Firemen's Hall in Mexico at which time the present Arbeit Lodge No. 168 was instituted with the following names listed as charter members: John Pifer, Hiram Ketchum, Frank E. Smith, Claude Tillapaugh, Fayette Clearwater, Luke S. Clearwater, George A. Southworth, Patrick A. Mahar, Jason C. Smith, Willard F. Shafer, and Joseph H. Maybee.

Patrick Mahar was elected as the first Noble Grand and Frank Smith was the Vice Grand. Grand Master Franklin P. Trautman was the instituting officer.

Nineteen candidates were made members that night making in all thirty members whose concentrated efforts were soon felt by the citizens of Mexico and vicinity.

Lodge Home

Two weeks later the lodge moved into the Becker building over what is now the A & P store and soon bought matting for the entire lodge room.

That fall a husking bee was held for a sick brother in keeping with good Odd Fellowship.

In October, 1899 a committee of five was appointed to inquire of the brothers their opinion of organizing a Rebekah lodge.

Several times during the next two years there was mention made in the recorded minutes of considering other places to rent for a lodge hall. At one time they considered the Gantley Hall which was in the Old Mexico House, where the Sinclair Gas Station now stands.

On October 30, 1901 the trustees were instructed to try to rent the Masonic Hall of E. L. Huntington for $80. per year. Later it was recorded that Mr. Huntington wanted $110. with the agreement that the hall be lighted with electricity. Later this offer was turned down. (The Huntington hall was what is now the Home Bureau rooms over Ramsey's store.)

Fraternity Hall

On September 16, 1903 a motion was presented and carried that a committee be appointed for the purpose of getting subscriptions for building a new hall. Later a committee was appointed giving them full power to buy a building or a lot and build. The committee consisted of Wilbur E. Jordan, Emmett Lewis and William H. Sherman.

Committeeman Jordan announced on October 7, 1903 the purchase of the Thomas block for a new home. Two weeks later the lodge made a down payment of $750. A resolution was made on Nov. 4, 1903 and adopted, authorized the trustees to purchase from R. C. Robertson the lot and building known as the "New Thomas Block." The price was not to exceed $4500.

The New Thomas building, later known as Fraternity Hall, was built by Fred Thomas who also built the big mill last owned by E. C. Dexter and burned in 1942. Mr. Thomas built a planning mill between Fraternity Hall and the river where now stands the village garage. The buildings were erected about 1900 and the timber was cut from what was known as the old Thomas lot which was located in the vicinity of Mullen Hill in back of the Hurlbuts. This timber lot was virgin timber and consisted largely of elm.

It seems that Mr. Thomas overextended himself financially and the building was taken over by R. C. Robertson of

Masons Rent

Fraternity Hall was constructed with the upper floor being designed for lodge rooms. The local Masonic lodge was the first and only occupant to use those rooms. The lower floor was to be used as a store, but the Odd Fellows soon made lodge rooms after they purchased the building.

During 1925 the Odd Fellows finished paying for the building after holding a big three day fair.

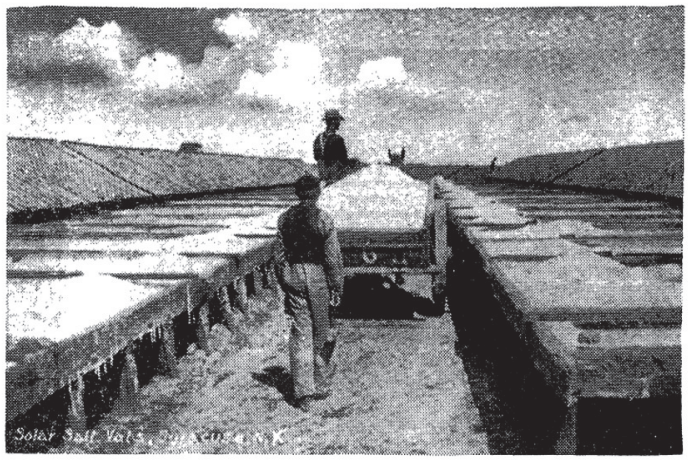
The local lodge has had four Past District Deputy Grand Masters, namely Almond Rose, William H. Sherman, Henry D. Nichols and Lewis J. Pifer and one Past Grand Patriarch, H. D. Nichols.

Howard McNett, long-time member of the local lodge, is at present Chaplain of Grand Lodge.

1960 Officers

Present staff includes: Noble Grand, Harold Loyst; Vice Grand, Erwin Coe; Secretary, Sterling Edwards; Financial Secretary, Howard McNett; Treasurer, Harry Cone; Right Supporter to Noble Grand, Joseph Baumgartner; Left Supporter to Noble Grand, Eugene Burrows; Warden, Myers Babcock; Conductor, John Burrows; Chaplain, Charles Jacobs; Outside Guard, Lester Wood; Inside Guard, George Wood; Right Supporter to Vice Grand, Edward Miller; Left Supporter to Vice Grand, Robert Jacobs.

View of Old Solar Salt Vats



In days gone by salt was a precious necessity and many were the long trips to Syracuse, the Salt City, to lay in the season's supply of the essential salt.

Officers of Mexico Grange No. 218, 1934

Seated, L to R: Hattie Sharpe, Blanche Jacobs, Vivian Henderson, Nellie Thomas, Norma Burdick, Florence Gibbs and Marjorie Sharpe Sischo.
Standing, L. to R: William Preman, William T. Haig, Stella D. Miller, secretary; J. Grant Rogers, Master; John Castle, Walter J. Burdick and Ernest D. Sharpe.

Silver Crest Rebekah Lodge Starts With 12 Charter Members

From May 4, 1950:—

Silver Crest Rebekah Lodge, No. 229, the sister lodge of Arbeit Lodge, No. 168 of the Odd Fellows, was instituted at three o'clock in the afternoon of March 15, 1900 by the Rebekah Assembly of the State of New York. This ceremony took place in the Arbeit Hall and there were twelve charter members: Mrs. Nellie Southworth, Charles Hessell, Mrs. Jennie Hessell, Dr. Franklin Smithe, John Pifer, Mrs. Mary Pifer, G. Southworth, C. S. Sherman, Mrs. Ida Whiting, Mr. John W. Whiting, Mrs. Grace Edwards, and Frank F. Edwards.

After the institution ceremonies were concluded, Mrs. Grace Edwards was elected the first noble grand and 32 applications were voted upon. At an adjourned meeting at 8 p. m. five more applications were received. The records show that the lodge prospered very well with many new members added at nearly every meeting.

Mrs. Grace Edwards was the first District Deputy from Silver Crest serving during 1902. She was a delegate to the assembly which met in Oswego on May 21, 1901. Of the many deputies credited to Mexico, there are Jennie King, Maud Davis, Leeanna Harvey, and Elda Cone. Among the older members in Rebekahship were Brother Fred P. Stewart, who joined the lodge in December, 1901; Brother Henry D. Nichols who joined in May, 1904; Brother Winfield and Sister Edna Smith, who joined in December, 1906, and Sister Florence Johnston, who joined in March, 1907, and is the oldest living member.

The meetings of the lodge have been many visits to other lodges, one of the first when they went to Caughdenoy in 1902 to initiate candidates. They made the trip by team at a cost of three dollars. Of the many interesting visitors to the Silver Crest Lodge was the drill team from Brockville, Canada which made a trip here in 1948 to confer the Rebekah Degree on a class of candidates. The group returned in 1952.

The list of Past Noble Grands for the Lodge's 50 years include: Grace Edwards, 1900; Ida Whiting, 1901; Leafy Smith, 1902; Lillie Stevens, '03; Louella Stewart, '04; Kittie A. Sherman, '05; and '30; Leafy Smith, '06; Anna Fish, '07; Mattie Denny, '08; Cora Nichols, '09; Jessie Delph, '11; Edna Smith, '12; and '21; Florence Johnston, '13; Stella D. Miller, '14 and '15; Grace Sherman, '16; Bertha Johnston Barlow, '17 and '34; Georgia Leary, '18; Emmojean McLymond, '19 and '20; Sadie Richardson, '23; Eva Wilson, '24; Edna Sherman, '25; Jennie King, '26 and '44; Lena Guyette Parker, '27 and '29; Leah Burroughs, '31 and '32; Gertrude Jacobs, '33; Hattie L. Davis, '36; Lucy H. Kio, '37; Ethel Bradway, '38; Elda Cone, '39; Matie Babcock, '40; Cecile Buck, '41; Louisa Oliver, '42; Stella Stevens, '45; Flossie Roff, '46; Edith Runion, '47; Marion McNett, '48; Gladys Ackley, '49 (also District Deputy president); Emma Krebs, '50; Mary Willis, '51; Charlotte Partrick, '52; Augusta Tubbs, '53; Beulah Woodruff, '54; Beverly Cone, '55; Reata Harvey, '56 (District Deputy President); Marion Perth '57; Beatrice Blunt, '58; Edith Hill, '59; Thelma Backus, curren Delong.

Second grand prize—New 1931 Ford Tudor Sedan. Mrs. Clara Hines.

Third prize—Lady's Diamond Ring, Mrs. Frances Fenner.

Results of Mexico Independent Subscription, Advertising, and Job printing campaign July 2, 1931 6 wks.

Grand capital prize—New 1931 Ford Town Sedan, Mrs. Doris

We are proud to be among the advertisers in this the Centennial Edition of the Mexico Independent, celebrating 100 years of community progress.

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Ph. 298-5181 Pulaski, N. Y.

Free Masonry Begins In 1806 In Alfred House

MASONIC LODGE NO. 136

Freemasonry in Mexico had its beginning in 1806 when a group of men petitioned Grand Lodge of the State of New York for a warrant. A dispensation was issued but the warrant withheld.

The first Masonic Communication in this area was held at the home of Samuel Rogers in 1808.

Several more attempts were made to secure a warrant and in 1818 Gov. Dewitt Clinton, Grand Master, signed and issued the document. However, in 1827, Mexico Lodge No. 307 surrendered their warrant as a result of the notoriety masonry gained from the famous Morgan case.

On June 15, 1848, Mexico Lodge No. 136 was organized with Bezaliel Thayer as Master. Charter members were: Joseph Bloomfield, Benjamin Gregory, David Goit, Louis Hutchings, Simon Le Roy, Avery Skinner, Sherman Hosmer, D. P. Spooner, Bradley Higgins, Charles Benedict.

The present lodge room was dedicated in 1902. A three day celebration marked the 100th anniversary in June 1948 and in 1960 the newly renoviated lodge room was rededicated.

R A M NO. 135

Mexico Chapter No. 135, Royal Arch Masons was chartered on February 5, 1851 with Gen. Bezeleel Thayer as the first High Priest. During the past 110 years Royal Arch Masonry has played an important part in the lives of many Mexico men. Thirty-three companions have succeeded Gen. Thayer as High Priest. Clyde A. Fineout is the present presiding officer.

First Officers

Bezeleel Thayer, High Priest
Avery Skinner, King
Simon Leroy, Scribe
Andrew B. Simons, Captain of the Host
Dr. Stephen Pardee, Principal Sojourner
Abner French, Royal Arch Captain
John Wood, 3rd Vail
Oliver Ramsdale, 2nd Vail
Robert C. Kenyon, 1st Vail
Joseph E. Bloomfield, Secretary
David Goit, Treasurer

These new officers were installed February 28, 1851 by Thomas S. Hall, High Priest of Sacketts Harbor Chapter No. 68, R. A. M., Sackets, Harbor, New York.

Past Masters, Mexico Lodge No. 136 —1953—

Seated, L to R: Sheldon K. Blank, Master, 1953; W. Harold Richardson, 1919; William H. Norton, 1901, 02, 03; Glenn A. Buck, 1917, 18; Captain D. Boyd, 1920; Charles T. Hurlbut, 1953.

Standing l to r: Dr. Harsey K. Leonard, 1932; Ralph R. Stevens, 1931; Harold F. Dunning, 1945; Walter J. Burdick, 1933, 34; George E. Green, 1946; Edson E. Dayton, 41-'42; F. Hoyt Hollister, 1926; Harry L. Nicholson, 1938; John H. Castle, 1947; Ray V. Runion, 1952; Harold C. Hurlbut, 1948, 50; Edgar J. Wilmer, 1951 and Leon S. Hurlbut, 1937, 43, 44.

Picture taken on the occasion of presentation of 50 year medals to four men pictured in front row. William Norton was master when they were initiated.

Front row: Dr. Charles Elkins, Harry Pepper, William Norton, D.D.G.M., Floyd Yates, Oakes Ames, Dr. Charles Curtis.

Back row: (40 year members): W. M. Sheldon Blank, Harold Elkins, Leslie Hyde, Elmer Smith, W. Harold Richardson, Glenn Buck, Horace Todd, C. D. Boyd, William Jones, Myron Loveland.

Victoria Chapter O.E.S. Formed With Mrs. Clara Davis As First Matron

Wednesday, Oct. 3, 1900:—

Victoria Chapter of the order of the Eastern Star was organized last Friday evening in Masonic Hall here. The Chapter was organized by Mrs. Clara Cooper Allen, D.D.G.M. of the 16th Eastern Star Dist. of this state. Mr. O. V. Davis of Pulaski acting as Grand Patron and Mr. Bersie of Adams acting as Grand Marshal.

The following officers were chosen for Victoria Chapter: Mrs. Clara Davis, W. Matron; Mr. R. A. Orvis, W. Patron; Mrs. Mary Hartwell, Associate Matron; Miss Jennie Baker, Sec'y.; Mrs. Florence Hart, Treas.; Mrs. Anna Thomas, Conductress; Mrs. Ruth Sampson, Associate Conductress; Mrs. Kate Hardie, Adah; Mrs. Emma Evarts, Ruth; Mrs. Mary Hare, Esther; Mrs. Della Bennett, Martha; Mrs. Hattie Porter, Electa; Mrs. Martha Robbins, Chaplain; Mrs. Theresa Elkins, Warder; Mrs. A. Maguire, Marshal; Miss L. Longstreet, organist; James S. Smith, Sentinel.

The Eastern Star degrees were exemplified by the officers of Pulaski Chapter, Mrs. Ella More, W. Matron; and Mr. George H. Fuller, W. Patron; in an impressive manner.

There was present from out of town, Mrs. Clara Cooper Allen, the D.D.G.M., and her husband and Mr. Bersie and wife of Adams, about 40 from Pulaski and about 35 from Puritan Chapter of Parish.

Victoria Chapter starts with a charter membership of 20, and it is due to the Past Masters R. H. Baker and R. A. Orvis of Mexico Lodge that the Chapter was organized. All present were delighted with the beautiful and impressive work of the Chapter degrees.

On September 28, 1900, a few friends assembled in the Masonic rooms in Mexico, and were called to order by Edward C. Bersie of Cecilia Chapter No. 156 O. W. S. acting R. W. Grand Marshal.

This account of the meeting appeared in the Oct. 3, 1900 issue of the Independent.

The Past Matrons have been; Clara W. Davis 1900-'03; Mary G. Hartwell, 1904-'05; Emma Evarts, 1906; Mary Stone, 1907; Eliza Richards, 1908-'09; Ella G. Johnson, 1910-'11; Mabel V. Simmons, 1912-'13; Lulu Brown, 1914-'15; Carrie E. Burdick, 1916; Lou Ella Ballard, 1917; Anna Fish, 1918-'19; Grace Boyd, 1920; Jessie Ludington, 1921-'22; Lulu K. Weedon, 1923; Kittie A. Sherman, 1924; Maybelle Kenyon, 1925; Mary R. Boyd, 1926; Ethel K. Stager, 1927; M. Maude Hurlbut, 1928; Ethel Backus, 1929; Euloda Fetcha, 1930; Arloine Backus, 1931; Ivy Fravor, 1932; Elsie Smith, 1933; Doris Delong, 1934.

Past Patrons are: R. A. Orvis, W. A. Robbins, Frank Elkins, R. H. Baker, Ethan Burdick, Glen A. Buck, F. Hoyt Hollister, E. W. Everett, Benjamin Burroughs, M. A. Cal-

Mexico, New York

October, 1961

Dear Friends,

With a mere 14 years in business we hardly deserve space in a local paper celebrating its 100th anniversary. However, even in our time, hardware has changed enormously. Over half the items we sell today were not made even five year ago; such is the rush of progress.

Business would be pretty shallow if we relied upon such a shifting base as material goods. We value most the contacts with you, our customers, who, varying outwardly with the years, retain those qualities which lend a sense of warmth and purpose to our daily efforts.

Sincerely,

Viola and Clifton Tompkins

TOMPKINS HARDWARE

MEXICO, NEW YORK

STORY OF FATHER OF MEXICO NEWS COVERAGE

Born in Westbury, England and taken as an orphan into the family of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Loyd, Henry Humphries learned the printer's trade in Devizes, England. He came to Canada in a sailing ship where he found employment as a printer, later moving to Utica in the same occupation.

In 1861, he arrived in Mexico with the ambitious scheme of starting a newspaper. Four years later, after he had established himself and could afford the "new situation," he married Mrs. Caroline Wales Severance and moved into a house on Church street built in 1839 for a female seminary. And in testimony to his love for children, the house and lot upon which it stood were willed by Mr. Humphries to the village as a playground for children.

His interest in church work, constantly attested to by the large space devoted to church news in the columns of his paper, was quickly evidenced by his appointment as leader of the Infant Department of the Presbyterian Sunday School. In 1867 he was named superintendent of the entire church school, a position he held for fifty years. When failing health forced him to resign in December, 1912, he was unanimously elected Honorary Superintendent.

A man of great energy and enthusiasm, Mr. Humphries was a familiar and loved figure in and around Mexico. On cold days, in place of an overcoat, he wore a gray shawl and whenever possible wore a flower in his buttonhole. (A picture of him, taken on one of his many trips to foreign lands, shows him wearing a flower as he posed amid some ruins in Greece.) He became famous as a speaker and often, on his bicycle, rode to many of the area churches to speak on Sunday afternoons. He was also one of the local regulars for patriotic and religious meetings.

The welfare of his adopted home was always uppermost in the little man's mind. Through the columns of his paper he supported the good causes for Mexico: the public park, paved streets, electric lights, public morality, prohibition, the band, the school, and every cause he felt would make for a better Mexico.

On his many trips abroad, Mr. Humphries wrote extensively of his experiences. He always found space for letters from other travelers so that readers of the Independent were treated to first hand information about the world at large. Henry Humphries believed that the local paper had an obligation to the education of its subscribers!

But man, even as great as was Henry Humphries, has a limited span on this earth and on June 23, 1924 the founder of the Independent died. He had sailed for his native England "to see once more the land of my birth" after he had passed his ninetieth birthday. In his native England he suffered a cerebral hemorrhage and thus

FA086

FASHIONS CHANGE, BUT GOOD TASTE NEVER CHANGES. ALWAYS SHOP WELL'S IN OSWEGO FOR QUALITY MEN'S AND BOYS CLOTHING CURRENTLY IN STYLE AND ALWAYS IN GOOD TASTE.

FRANK G. WELLS

5-7-9 East Bridge St. Oswego, N. Y.

Bridge Group Brings Back Card Game

DUPLICATE BRIDGE

The spark that started our local Duplicate Bridge Club was a telephone call from Bob Gray to the Brown sisters suggesting that both players and boards would be very welcome at an approaching public bridge paryt. i lic bridge party.

Sure enough, on November 17, 1953, sixteen interested players met at Beck's hotel and attempted a session of duplicate. No one knew how to steer the process correctly but it was fun and prefaced further gatherings.

On December 11, 1953 we had our own first official duplicate party at Becks. Our procedure was still mixed but it was still fun. Shortly after the new year (1954) we started playing pretty regularly on Friday nights with an average of five tables. Visitors from Pulaski, Oswego, Fulton and other nearby places soon joined us.

Since then our weekly get-togethers have become an established custom for most of us. Also timidity has waned for several occasional players have now become ardent duplicate fans. We are not experts but we do take our fun seriously and always look for improvement.

Presidents of our Club have been John O'Mara, Gladys Dunning, Mildred Black, Ruth Joice, Fred Gibbons, Worth Dygert, with Verna O'Mara as our present leader.

Trophies are awarded each year. Their slogan, "Hands Across the Years," refers to the old Duplicate Men's club of many years ago which we are thus honoring. The winners of these trophies have been: 1954, Gracie Gray; 1955, Florence Brown; 1956, Bob Gray; 1957, Florence Brown; 1958, Fred Gibbons; and 1959 and 1960, John O'Mara.

We are justly proud of the oft repeated remark that we are one of the friendliest groups going. In that spirit we welcome all newcomers.

The test of time has already proven that good things never die.

Marion D. Brown, Sec.

HENRY HUMPHRIES CONT. was prevented from "returning home."

He was buried in the White Horse cemetery in his native Westbury. Memorial services were held in Mexico and a memorial stone erected in the village cemetery. Thus there is an enduring reminder to Mexico that there once was among them a man of great religious, civic, and humanitarian principle.

But every issue of the Independent is a renewal of the spirit of Henry Humphries. Although the paper has undergone many changes, each reflecting the times in which it is produced, the backbone of the paper will always be the spirit of its founder, Henry Humphries.

William Hosea Ballou, who published his first article at the age of seventeen in the Independent and later attained

Masonic Lodge No. 136

Past High Priests of Mexico

Thayer, Bezeleel, 1851-55, 60-61
Skinner, Avery, 1856-59, 62-63
Conklin, L. H. 1864-71, 78
Skinner, T. W. 1872-73, 75-77, 79, 82-89
VanBuren, D. B. 1874
VanBuren, J. G. 1880-81
Baker, Robert H. 1890-1905. 08
Norton, William H. 1906-07
Landgraff, H. A. 1909
Lindsley, A. C. 1910-11
Simons, Ross L. 1912-14
Johnson, George W. 1915-16
Stone, Frederick D. 1917-19
Buck, Glenn A. 1920-21
Richardson, W. Harold, 1922
Boyd, Captain D. 1923-24
Sherman, William H. 1925-29
Hurlbut, Charles T. 1930-31, 43-45
Hollister, F. Hoyt, 1932, 38-42
Smith, Charles T., 1933
Pettingill, Claude A., 1934
Miner, Leroy M., 1935
Fenner, Sherman A., 1936-37
Tecler, William, 1946
Hurlbut, Leon S., 1947-48
Fetcha, Williard W., 1949-51
Castle, John H., 1952, 53, 54
Row, Glen G., 1955
Burdick, Walter J., 1956
Crandall, Douglas W., 1957
Wilmer, Edgar J., 1958
Wright, Arthur D., 1959
Blank, Sheldon K., 1960

FAMOUS OLD LANDMARK

Above is shown the Peter Chandler House which was separated to make the home now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Earl Eichelberger and the house recently purchased by Charles Giovo.

Peter Chandler arrived in Mexico with $1.09 cents in cash and his will when he died indicated a worth of $76,000. He came here in 1827 at 24 years of age. He rented a store from Col. Fitch and engaged in general merchandise business. He sold his store to his two clerks, S. H. and B. S. Stone in 1845. He died in 1848.

recognition as a scientist and author, sent the following verses to Mr. Humphries in 1884. They give a picture of the little editor which was appreciated by all who knew him.

"The Country Editor"

"I saw him at his font
As he sat upon his stool
And he smiled upon the boys
As we passed along to school,
Grinning,
Winning,
Happy with his type and rule.

* *

He could clip, he could paste,
He could write a leader fine,
And set it up in style,
While he cut a monkey shine
For the boys,
Full of noise,
Happy tying type with twine.

* *

He could run Sunday-schools,
Standing high up, on a chair--
He wasn't tall enough
till he got up in the air--
Off like a gun,
Bubbling with fun,
Happy with the children there.

* *

I saw him as he grasped
With his honest grip and kind,
the hands of all the boys
As they left new fields to find,
And his smile
Is the while
Ever in their lives entwined."

A RIDE IN THE COUNTRY

1861 STYLE

Our supply of bicycles built for two is exhausted.

But we have a nice selection of reconditioned used cars ready to go.

We suggest that when in need of better transportation you see DAVIS.

If we don't have what you want, we will try to get it for you . . . even if you insist on a bicycle built for two!

R. E. DAVIS & SON

"Visit our Modern Show Room"

FI 4-5040

152 W. 1st Oswego, N. Y.

MUSICAL GROUPS HAVE LONG BEEN A PART OF MEXICO'S CULTURAL LIFE

Apparently Mexico has always had a musical organization of some kind. Throughout its history references are made to one or another band, orchestra, or choral group. "Our martial band" was mentioned in the Independent in 1861.

In 1868 W. H. Penfield organized the "Helicon" band and became its first director playing E flat cornet. Members at that time were: George Rickard, cornet; Theodore Webb, E flat cornet; Ed Parmalee, cornet; George Landers, clarinet; Ernest Whitney, alto; Jud Rickard, alto; Fred Landers, alto; Malon Remington, tenor; Ed Parker, baritone; Charles Fellows, baritone; George Penfield, bass; Chales Copp, tenor; John Cobb, snare drum; Homer Ames, bass drum, John Perter, alto; and Will Flint. Another source gives the year of organization as 1871 with Herbert Graves as leader.

Band Reorganized

In 1888 Ed Parker reorganized the band and directed it for about 20 years. This was called the Silver Cornet Band. His successors were Frank Hoose, Frank Hall, and Carl Hollister. At this time the band disbanded until the year 1919, when F. J. Smith moved here from Illinois and organized the Mexico Chamber of Commerce Band with B. G. Buck as manager.

The membership then consisted of Ralph Thomas, cornet; Guy Smith, cornet; Paul Gero, baritone; Walter Burdick, baritone; G. Lundington, alto; Oliver Mowry, alto; M. C. Fellows, cornet; Del Borden, clarinet; Glen Buck, clarinet; H. Pettingill, bass; Earl Everts, cornet; A. J. Lake, snare drum; A. L. Houghton, trombone; B. G. Buck, trombone; F. G. Smith, director. Mr. Smith also organized a boys band of twelve members. He directed the bands until 1923 when he moved to Oswego.

Merchants Band

With the arrival of Glen Smith in 1925 two years later, Mexico again had a band. The American Legion Band later became the Mexico Merchants' Band. A. Lee Houghton was president; Claude Pettingill, treasurer; and Glen Smith, manager and director.

Membership consisted of C. A. Pettingill, bass; Spencer Walton, bass; Master Warner, trombone; Lee Houghton, trombone; Earl Smith, trombone; Harry Phillips, double bass; Dr. Carl Hollister, alto; Dell Borden, alto; Richard Guile, tenor sax; Sam Detor, cornet; Jesse Lawton, cornet; Glen Smith, conductor-clarinet; Glen Buck, clarinet, Howard Fults, clarinet; Charles Ames, clarinet, Ralph Walton, bass drum; Alfred Barnes, snare drum; John Phillips, cornet, Fred Warner, cornet; Harold Palmer, cornet; Walter Burdick, baritone; Herman Randall, clarinet; Louis Capinerro, trombone.

This band gave the weekly Thursday night concerts during the summer on Main street, and after 1937 in the band shell on North Jefferson street. World War II interrupted these programs.

In 1930 Glen Smith organized a junior band of 48 boys and girls. However, with the coming of the new school and music lessons and a high school band available, the school took over.

High School Band

Weldon Gross of Oswego was the first high school band director. He was followed by Harry Carney, who taught instrumental music on a full time basis. He is now director of Music at Miami Edison High school at Miami, Fla.

In 1946 Sheldon Blank took over the direction of the Mexico Academy and Central school band and developed a senior band that now numbers 100 members. Mr. Blank also maintains a junior band, an intermediate band and a full corps of twirlers and a color guard. The record of the MACS band in competition ranks with the best in the state.

Under the sponsorship of the Parish Oil Company, Glen Smith organized and still maintains "Smithy's Blue Sunoco Band" playing professionally at many events throughout the state.

FAMOUS COLOSSE CORNET BAND - 1903

Row 1: Celeste Henry, Charles Hammecker, Julius Tackley

Row 2: Stanley House, Frank Jaquin, George Loren, Charles House, Hubert Gardener, Frank Henry Jr., N. N. Alger.

Row 3: Elbert Pettingill, Arthur Jaquin, Fred House, Henry Nichols, Henry LeClair, Clarence Booth, John Cobb.

The members of this famous band were required to sign a contract not to touch liquor while on a job. It was first organized in 1873.

ODD NAME

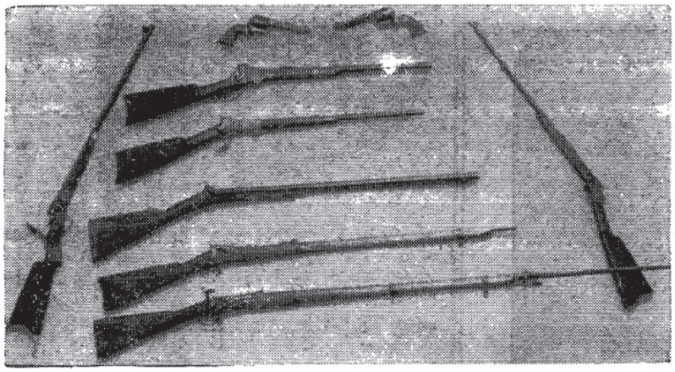
Beanery

Another name familiar to residents is the "Beanery," applied to the stone and frame house just off Route 3 at the north boundary of the village. One explanation is that the family occupying it always furnished baked beans to snowbound passengers on R. W. and O. trains before the days of rotary plows. Another is that its original name was "The Deanery" which became corrupted to "The Beanery."

The stone part of the house was built by Richard Hamilton and his two sons, James and Reuben, in 1846 of stone drawn from the lake. The walls are thick giving deep-set windows and deep window seats. The architect was David Wilcox, who married Richard Hamilton's daughter Olive, a beauty of her day.

In 1878 Mr. Wilcox retired from business in Syracuse and came to Mexico to live. He built on the "Victorian Gothic" timber addition with a Captain's Walk or "Widow's Walk" on the roof from which miles of Lake Ontario could be viewed.

SHOOTING & HUNTING HAVEN'T CHANGED, JUST THE EQUIPMENT



OLD GUNS

Left—Remington Hepburn, 32-40

Right—Remington Rollingblock, 22

Top—Colt 45, Peacemakers

Top Rifle—Sharps Buffalo Gun

2nd—Burnside, Civil War Carbine

3rd—10 Ga. Muzzle Loader

4th—45/70 Springfield

5th—Tower, Muzzle Loader, Rifle

NEW GUNS

Left—Maunlicher Schonceur, Cal. 308 Win.

Right—Mod. 58 Gas Operated Auto. 12 ga.

Top Left—Colt Python 357 Magnum

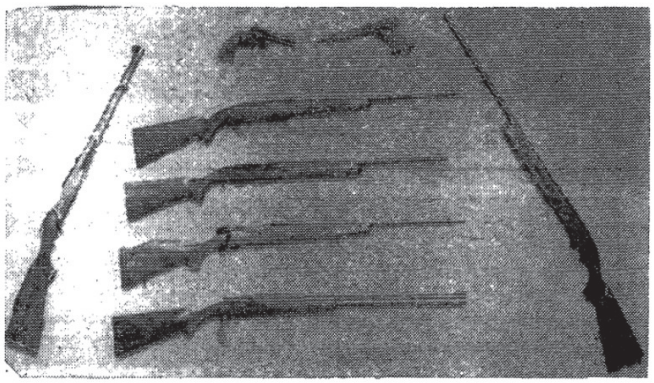
Top Right—Colt Match Target, 22 Auto.

Top Rifle—Mod. 88, Win. Lever Action, Cal. 308

2nd—Remington, Auto Rifle, Cal. 280

3rd—Weatherby Magnum, Cal. 300

4th—Browning Over & Under, Shotgun



BRECKHEIMER'S GUN SUPPLY

500 NEW and USED GUNS

Reloading Components

Complete Gunsmithing

Route 69A NA 5-7498 Parish, N. Y.

Mexico Merchants Band In 1935

Under the direction of Glen Smith, Mexico had a band for many years. Picture was taken in 1935. Back row, left to right: Claude A. Pettingill, Spencer Walton Master Walton, John Castle, Lee Houghton, Earl Smith, and Harry Phillips
Second row: Dr. Carl W. Hollister, Adelbert Borden, Richard Guile, Sam DeTor and Jesse A. Lawton.
Front row: Glen Smith, conductor Glenn A. Buck, Howard E. Fults, Charles Ames, Ralph Walton, Alfred Barnes John Phillips, Fred Warner and Harold Palmer. Three members were absent: Walter J. Burdick, Herman Randall and Louis Cappinarrio.

Amateur Champs of Oswego Co.

Pictured above are the six basketball players who beat all opposition in 1913 to capture the County championship. Names are incomplete. Left to right: Baptist minister, Rev. Watkins; Drug store owner, Harold Richardson; high school principal, Prof. W. Wilmont; Lawyer Stone; drug store employee, William Mulloy; Ag. teacher, Mr. Curran.

FAMILIAR SCENES OF LONG AGO

The Boyd House (now Beck's)

Mexico Point

Mexico Point looking east from the Inn toward Twice Told Inn

You Might Have Looked
Like This In 1861

Much has changed in this world of ours since 1861, including the methods of shopping and items purchased.

BAMFORD'S RED & WHITE FOOD STORE IN PARISH IS PROUD TO CELEBRATE ITS FIRST ANNIVERSARY ALONG WITH THE MEXICO INDEPEND. ENT ON ITS 100th.

Stop in at our store today . You won't find that things look anything like the picture above, but you will find the finest in groceries and meats along with the best possible service—prompt and courteous.

RED & WHITE FOOD STORES

BAMFORD'S

NA 5-7921 Parish, N. Y

Parish, N. Y.

BEFORE THE ADVENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES LOCAL BUSINESS LIGHTS VILLAGE

MEXICO ELECTRIC COMPANY

Wednesday, August 2, 1891:—

We are glad to note the completion of the electric plant in our midst. Our citizens well know the time and energy spent by the company, and the determination to make the plant a success in the midst of the danger and difficulties regarding power to drive the dynamos. They have two large wheels, manufactured by Percival and Wood, of Camden, N. Y., which furnish 125 horse power with head given.

Each dynamo has a separate wheel, keeping the street circuit and incandescent entirely separate and independent of each other, thereby guaranteeing perfect lighting. The arc lights on our streets cannot be surpassed in brilliancy and steadiness. In no city or town around us do they equal our lights. The commercial lights are run much more brilliant than elsewhere. Fifty volts being the usual power of the lights elsewhere, but they are run 53 to 55 volts here. The Methodist church was lit up for the first time Sabbath evening, and presented a beautiful appearance. In every part of the church, from gallery to orchestra, the finest print can be easily read and the distribution of the light is perfect; the lights are run on the incandescent circuit. The hotels and stores present a brilliant appearance nightly. Also the residences of our citizens who have put in lights.

The dam has been thoroughly repaired and perfected. One thousand tons of gravel and clay has been put on the dam and nearly every leak stopped, new planked throughout, new flumes and wash gate put in. Every precaution taken to make it a perpetual power. An abundance of water is the result, even in midst of this dry season. No effort or expense has been spared to make it one of the best plants in the state, and the company feels abundantly able to fill all contracts for lighting public buildings, stores, churches, and residences. It has been the means of distributing thousands of dollars to the laboring men of our place, and is one of the enterprises of our village and has come to stay among us. We hope all our business men will adopt the lights and give their order, also our town hall and churches and residences. The company is of us and among us, and their ocurage and enterprise should be rewarded by a liberal patronage. We trust our citizens will visit the plant nightly and see the perfectness of the work. We understand several of our business places will give their orders this week. We are glad to see the push of all such enterprises in our village, and hope to see more of such matter with us.

Wednesday, April 20, 1892:—

We are glad to note the continued improvements made by our Electric Light Co., and the beautiful lights given us on the streets and in the stores, offices and residences. The company has just put on a new improved pulley, thereby speeding the machine 200 more turns to the minute, which increases the voltage to 60, giving the patrons nearly 25 percent more light per lamp, with no increase in cost to them. The lights run steadily and are perfectly reliable, and our merchants and citizens, who as yet have not put in these most beautiful lights need have no fear of their durability and stadiness.

Again we wish to say that the business is a permanent one, a great town improvement, but we should patronize the business and make the company feel that their hard work and efforts to give us a perfect light are appreciated. We hope to see the remainder of our stores put in the lights, as the company's rates nearly bring the price down to common oil lighting being much less than any other plant in the country. Perfect satisfaction is guaranteed.

Mr. Didier, our jeweler, is the company's electrician, and we believe one of the best. He supervises the whole electric plant. We hope to see the remainder of our large stores put in the lights this month, as over seven-eighths of all the buisness place are now lighted. At the small advance above oil they should assist the enterprise and make it a success.

The Light Story

After a long period of education, the first electric lights were installed on a trial basis in September, 1887. A. C. Thomas furnishing the water power free. Early users of the new gadgets were E. L. Huntington in his drug store, W. H. Penfield in the express office, A. C. Thomas in Toronto Mill, and Capt. Boyd in the reading room of the hotel.

A representative of the Schuyler Electric Co., Charles E. Hocknell, rented the tannery engine to produce power; but engine trouble developed and Mr. Thomas agreed to the water power deal until the engine could be put back in running condition. Clark and Howard, proprietors of the foundry, then took a contract for ten years to take charge of the plant and to furnish sixty horsepower by Feb. 1890. Their engine blew up and Homer Ames volunteered to furnish water power. In 1890 the company bought the Hendrickson mill dam in Salmon Creek south of the village which gave them sufficient water power.

Originally twenty street lights were contracted for by the village fathers at $1000 a year for five years. The arrangements called for service until midnight on twenty nights in the month. In case moonlight was not sufficient on the other nights, additional service could be ordered.

Early in 1891 the Mexico Electric Light, Heat, and Power Company, with E. L. Huntington at its head was able to furnish full service.

Penfield's old Wagon Shop next became the Company's headquarters with R. L. Houghton as manager. This place was torn down in 1927 to allow for the construction of the substation now located there. (Corner of Main and Lincoln Ave.)

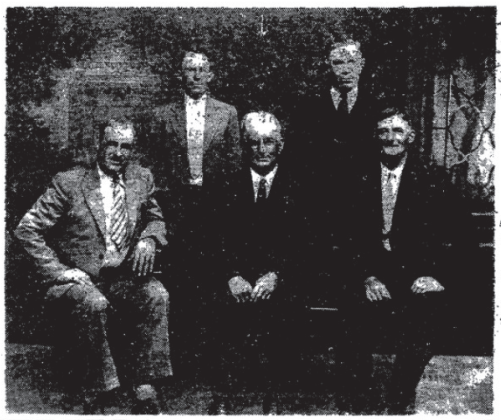
FIRST R.F.D. CARRIERS IN MEXICO - 1907

L. to R.: C. D. Boyd, R. V. Wilcox, Myrna Fellows, Ralph Walton, Perle Doil. Picture taken when Ruarl Mail Service started at local Post Office.

RURAL CARRIERS RETIRE FROM SERVICE - 1935

Seated: Myrna Fellows, Ralph Walton, Perle Doil.

Standing: Captain Boyd, Ray Wilcox.



1890

We're not celebrating our centennial in Mexico, but we're looking forward to it. Niagara Mohawk came to Mexico twenty-nine years after Henry Humphries founded his family newspaper, the Mexico Independent. During these years just before the turn of the century, it was big news when it was reported that electric lights would soon light Mexico's Main Street.

The type for such news articles was probably hand set in a press room much like the one pictured above—a far cry from the facilities of today's Mexico Independent. The quality of newspaper publishing has improved greatly during these past many years. We salute the Mexico Independent for its role in helping to promote this improvement in quality and for its continued service to the community.

The business of electricity has grown, too. We at Niagara Mohawk take off our hats to the pioneers in the business who first ventured to erect the crude arc lights of the late 1880's. Today we take pride, too, in the part we are playing to help this area grow. Supplying dependable, plentiful, low cost electric power to our customers in Mexico is our contribution toward helping make the future look even brighter than the past.

NIAGARA MOHAWK

INVESTOR OWNED ★ TAXPAYING

Mexico and Snow Go On and On

In 1947 Old Man Winter ran well ahead of the highway department with the result shown above. For three days Mexico was completely isolated and the arrival of bread trucks was cause for general jubilation.

—From The Editor—

Celebrating a one hundredth birthday is an exciting event. Through the years since 1861 when Henry Humphries and his partner began their precarious venture the "Mexico Independent" has withstood many crisis, some of which would have destroyed a less durable enterprize. However, the spirit of the founder has always permeated the life of this newspaper in spite of insurmountable difficulties, the "Independent" has survived. Therefore, this Centennial Edition is designed to commemorate the memory of Henry Humphries, the little Englishman whose influenoe is still felt in the life of Mexico, as well as honor the village he loved so well.

In bringing this edition to you, we have had to depend upon the cooperation of numbers of people.. Those who dug into attics and cubbyholes for pictures, those who searched through long forgotten records, and those who spent long hours remembering events and names—to all these people, we are grateful.

Special thanks must go to Miss Elizabeth Simpson, former town historian and author of the book, "Mexico, Mother of Towns." She has given freely of her time and incomparable knowledge. Her book has been a guide to help in verifying facts. Without these two it is doubtful that this edition could have been printed.

Harry Stone, John Castle, Mrs. Arthur Moore, and many others have contributed greatly. Lucy Kio, former editor of the paper, did much of the early work in gathering material.

Kenneth McKee, pressman Clarence Duell, linotype operator, have extended themselves beyond the mere "doing a job" to present material in the best manner.

There are some omissions and oversights, but we have tried to use material sent us by countless organizations. We couldn't write historical sketches without the cooperation of the organizations' officers.

In large measure we have tried to let columuns from old issues of the "Independent" tell the fascinating story of our town and we might say with Editor Bartlett of "Famous Quotations" fame:

"I have gathered me a bouquet
of other men's posies;
Only the tie that binds them is
mine own."

The Principle Is The Same - - -
Procedure Is Different!

DAIRY PRODUCTS
Grade "A" & Homogenized Milk
Cash & Carry
Home Delivery

DA-MAR Mexico Dairy

Spring Street Mexico WO 3-3612

Paper Mirrors History for 100 Years

Century of Publishing Proves Humphries' Dream

This year, 1961, rounds out a complete century of the Mexico Independent which first appeared on the local streets on March 21, 1861. The new paper came from the press of two young printers, Henry Humphries and James M. Scarrit. They had recently arrived in town with a few fonts of type, a hand press and a Guernsey power press, plus a few other fixtures of the trade--all second hand and given to them by a former employer who could not pay cash for previous labor.

The beginning of a newspaper was not under the most auspicious circumstances, for there had been two predecessors to the new paper. Only tradition supports the story of one paper, supposedly operated by a negro. The other, "The Oswego County Democrat," was founded by Thomas Messenger in 1839. The name was soon changed to "The Messenger." The first issue was apparetnly on September 3, and was to appear on Tuesdays with subscriptions at $2 per year.

However, "the pressure," better known as the Panic of 1837, struck Mexico with full force in 1839 and the publisher probably could not weather the period when money was practically non-existent in the small community, and the paper did not last out the year.

Quick Demise

In that same year an ambitious student, Charles Poucher, began a term of school in the old Mexico Academy. He tells, in a letter written in 1911 of an "enterprising printer" moving his office from Port Ontario to Mexico to issue a paper, "the type of which I helped set." For a time the paper flourished; but eventually it faded and died. The young student, as a result of his experiences, entertained ideas of continuing the paper, but, "the village was then small, the prospective advertisers few, and the general outlook not encouraging, so I finished my education and left for other fields."

So, with that history in the background, the newcomers modestly began operations on the second floor of a building known as the Webb block, on the northwest corner of Main and North Jefferson streets. The difficulty with which this was managed is best described in the editor's own words:

PRINTERS TROUBLE:

(Our first Number on Gal. 4)

There were other problems to be met, the suspicion of a rural populace of two printers newly arrived in town. As Mr. Humphries said:

"It was amusing to see how the people feared us, not perhaps on account of our magnificant proportions but through a fear that we mght get more than was our due from their pockets. They looked for this attempt to establish a paper here to prove unsuccessful, like one or two previous ones, and so they paid twenty-five cents at a time until they became satisfied that we would stay. They were very kind. We were almost flooded with turnips and pumpkins and poetry."

The paper survived these early perils and on December 28, 1865, Mr. Humphries announced the dissolution of his partnership with Mr. Scarrit, who later became the proprietor of "The Hudson, Michigan Post."

Homes of Paper

In 1882 on the twenty-first anniversary of the paper, Mr. Humphries recounted the moves of the Independent.

"Our first office was in the Webb block over Peck and Conklin's store (on the northwest corner of Main and Jefferson streets, now occupied by Tompkins' Hardware Store). Afterward we built what is now the photograph gallery on the west side of South Jefferson street to the rear of the corner drug store, (ie. Crandall's) where the Independent was published until we removed to our present office in August 1869." In this issue of June 25, 1863 is the announcement of a move to a "new and commodious building on Jefferson street one door north of Downing's Law Office." Here with the office on a first floor, it was possible to install a new power press. The paper was printed here until August 18, 1869 when another move took the Independent to "the upper commodious and pleasant rooms of Pruyne's new block on Main street," where publication continued until the entire printing establishment was moved in 1953 to the present location.

On Oct. 2, 1872, the Independent incorporated a page devoted to the interests of the deaf and called "The Deaf Mutes Journal." This was continued until Nov. 5, 1874 when Henry Rider, son-in-law of Peter Chandler, published a separate Journal. This paper was continued for two more years in a building that stood just east of Dr. William Harter's present residence.

50th. Year

On the Independent's fiftieth anniversary in 1911, the proprietor was understandably proud of his achievement.

Insert No. 3:

"With this week's issue the Independent enters upon its fifty-first year, the first number appearing March 21, 1861. Regularly on the publication day it has come out every week since that time. Never in all these fifty years has it failed or been a day late. We celebrate this event by giving the old Independent a new dress. We feel that it deserves it and we hope our readers will be pleased with the change.

"Possibly fifty years of newspaper editing gives a man the right to indulge in something approaching self-glorification; possible it doesn't, but we are going to do it, just the same. Not only has the Independent appeared on time, but we think it has been honest--honest with its patrons and honest with its employees. Not once in that time have the latter

(Continued on next page)

A Humphries Employee

The last of the employees to work for Mr. Humphries, Clarence Hosford, concluded his printing career at the "Independent" in 1959.

CLARENCE HOSFORD

The following letter was received from Clarence Hosford whose printing experience was closed in the summer of 1959 when he worked for the Independent. He was the last of the former employees of Henry Humphries to serve this paper.

"I am so happy to greet you on this Centennial celebration of the Mexico Independent on March 21, 1961. It was my great privilege to learn the printing trade from April 7, 1903 to August, 1919. Those were good days under Mr. Henry Humphries to the time that he sold out to E. A. Blair on July 1, 1917; I remained with Mr. Blair until August, 1919. Then I went to Syracuse to work in the Wesleyan Methodist Publishing Association starting on November 12, 1919 and retired from the printing business on October 23, 1953. This made a little over 50 years of working as a printer, and I can say I was very glad that I decided to make up my mind on April 7, 1903 that I would stay and start to learn the trade whether it would mean hard days to set type by hand sitting up on a stool to a case of type. Those were trying days to be sure but I stuck to it through thick and thin. It was hard for me to quit school, but learning the printing trade was a good school.

"I had the privilege to work three days a week through the summers of 1957, 1958 and 1959 in the print shop of the Mexico Independent. As a joke to the workers I then said that I had come back to learn my trade over again and go out from the Independent office to work another fifty years. I wish to say

(Continued on next page)

- - - where your friends meet

The MEXICO THEATRE has kept pace with this fast-moving industry. Patrons of this theatre are treated to a feeling of realism and "presence" that makes movies the favorite family entertainment. The management's policy of booking top films and showing them while they are new, has enabled this theatre to keep its place as the home of good entertainment in Mexico.

Screen Time

Thurs. & Fri—7:00 P. M., 2 shows

Saturday—2:30 Matinee, 7:00 evening

Sunday—2:30, continuous

Mon. & Tues.—7:45 P. M., one show only

MEXICO THEATRE

Main Street Mexico, N. Y.

Phone WO 3-3311

failed to receive their wages weekly. Possibly, in the earlier years of our running the paper, this may have caused sleepless nights; but when Saturday came the wages were ready. We and our employees have been, and are, friends, and they have remained with us. Upwards of forty-two years Mr. Berry has been our foreman; Mrs. Baker has been in our employ thirty-six years, and Clarence Hosford has been with us eight years.

"We appreciate the kindness we have received from the people of this town and vicinity and the hearty support of our patrons during these many years and trust that our relations will continue to be mutually pleasant. We feel that all this time we have endeavored to publish a clean, readable paper, and, although we never reached our ideal, we have striven faithfully. 'With malice toward none and with charity for all', we begin Volume Fifty-one, trusting that it will in no wise be less worthy of support than were its predecessors."

As a matter of principle, the first editor gave much space to the prohibition movement, the W.C.T.U., reports of the Academy and all district schools, histories of the town and village, church activities, and condensed reports on national and international news. He never missed an opportunity to publish news that would moralize on the evils of drinking and smoking. Often the news columns would contain editorial reflections on some happening in the village.

In 1869, John Berry was employed and soon became the ins Baker entered the office in 1875, and Clarence Hosford in 1903. Each of these persons contributed to the success of the paper. (An account of John Berry's affiliation with the paper is given in a letter, printed elsewhere in this edition, written by the Rev. Arthur D. Berry.)

Humphries Sells

Following the deaths of Mr. Berry and of Mrs. Humphries in 1917, Mr. Humphries felt that he had to give up the paper. On June 28, 1917 he published his farewell to the Independent and in July, 1917 relinquished the reins he had so long held--56 years---to Ernest A. Blair.

Mrs. Blair, writing for the seventy - fifth anniversary edition, tells the story of that period:

Feb. 25, 1935:—

"Mr. Blair and I lived in Mexico in 1902, Mr. Blair being in partnership with his brother-in-law in the grist mill located where the store house of the Ames lumber business was later located. When he found the heavy lifting was impairing his health, he approached Mr. Humphries with the idea of buying The Independent, but Mr. Humphries said he could not think of selling, so Mr. Blair went to Cleveland, N. Y. and purchased the Lakeside Press. In June, 1917, he received a letter from Mr. Humphries saying he wanted to iive up the work and asking if Mr. Blair did not want to take it over. The fact that Mrs. Humphries and his foreman, Mr. John Berry had died within a short time of each other, that Mrs. Ella Baker, who had been with him for over forty years was obliged to give up of her sister-in-law, and that Iola Davis, who had been with him for five years wished to be released to become the wife of A. Leroy Rude, leaving only Clarence Hosford of his old force, was the cause of his giving up the work. He said if he could go on with his old force, he believed he could run the paper until he was 100 years old. Mr. Blair took over the paper July 1, 1917.

"If Mr. Blair had realized what was before him because of the World War, he would not have thought he could undertake the work, for he surely went through very troublous times. When he went there Mr. Humphries was paying $28 per week for three helpers, but within a very short time Mr. Blair had to pay $30 for one man. The price of print paper soared until it cost one cent for the sheet to print the paper on, besides the cost of labor to get it out, and the paper sold for three sents. Paper was hard to get and it was impossible to get more than a week's supply at a time, making it necessary to go to Fulton for it or have it sent by express each week.

"The help problem became very acute. Clarence Hosford remained with us, and Mrs. Rude helped us out whenever possible for some time, but other local help was not to be had. The strangers we were obliged to import were very unsatisfactory. One was so crippled he could do no heavy work, and several drank so they could not be depended on, so the help changed often.

"After a time, Mr. R. Austin Backus, who was doing a rapidly increasing work in Holstein cattle sales, and having his catalogs printed some distance away, approached Mr. Blair with the idea of having his printing done at home where he could give it closer supervision. That was impossible with the old hand composition and made it necessary to install a linotype machine. We had very able help with that for a time and during that time I learned the operating of the machine so far as setting up the matter if the machine would behave, but it seemed almost human in its spells of getting cranky.

"Clarence Hosford left us about the time the linotype was installed, but Alvin Richardson came in, and with his mechanical ability helped Mr. Blair to conquer the tricks of the machine. The long waits for the machine made it necessary for us to work into the wee small hours many times.

"The motive power at that time was a gasoline engine that had done long years of service like the rest of the early helpers. I well remember one night, when the paper had to be run off to get into the mail the next morning, that Mr. Charles Evarts called up at 2 a. m. and asked if we would please shut off that engine. We did hate to inflict such things on our neighbors, but could do no other way for some time until Mr. Blair was able to install electric power.

"During the five years when things were so hard we often became very discouraged and I would say we never could hold out and it was no disgrace to fail when times were so hard, but Mr. Blair, with his indomitable will and patience would say, "Let me do the worrying and we'll weather the blast."

"The later years were not so hard, but the hard work of earlier years caused the breaking of Mr. Blair's health, and as he was seeing the necessity of giving up we were greatly favored by the fact that Mr. Backus considered purchasing the plant and doing his own printing. This he did December 1, 1924.

HOSFORD LETTER Contd

that all of them in the Independent office were very good and kind to me which I appreciated very much.

"I am a believer in giving flowers to the living and not wait until they pass from this life. So here are the flowers that I give to Mr. Evert Backus---he is one of the best men that I ever worked for and he was very good to me. He was kind and pleasant to me. I am glad that I had these three years and as long as I live I will never forget it. I worked on the linotype machine which was so much improved from setting type by hand.

"Greeting to all the employees of the Independent. Keep up the good work that you are doing."

Clarence Hosford

Webb Block, North of Main

There seems to be little change in the general appearance of this section of town from 50 years ago. The hitching post, sidewalk awning and dirt street have passed away.

"I have noted the many improvements during the past ten years, and realized what it has meant to Mr. Backus beside his many activities outside the Independent office, and I extend hearty wishes for the continued success of the old home town paper, and hope it will continue to prosper at least until the century mark.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Annie Blair Howes
Visalia, Calif."

New Owner

In its first 75 years of existence, the paper had only three editors, Henry Humphries, Ernest A. Blair (July 1917-Nov. 1924), and R. Austin Backus. The newspaper and print shop were the sole means of support for the first two; therefore they did their own editing. However, the demands of the auctioneering business often took Mr. Backus out of town for many days on end. It was necessary for him to rely on others to do the actual job of getting out the paper. He did nevertheless, author many editorials that had a telling effect upon the community. He always found time to write tributes at the passing of well-known citizens.

Edwin M. Huestis became the first associate editor under the Backus regime. He continued in this capacity until 1939 when Edward Marks took over the responsibility. Mr. Marks authored the popular and still

(Continued on next page)

Congratulations

to the

MEXICO INDEPENDENT

On

100 YEARS OF

Continuous

COMMUNITY SERVICE

MARSELLUS

VAULT & SALES CO., INC.

Main Street Mexico, N. Y.

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Since 1941

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Congratulations

on the occasion of your Centennial. Best Wishes for many more prosperous years.

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The Family Gift Center

COMMUNITY FEED MILL
Direct From Mill To You

Central Square, N. Y.
Serving with Integrity Since 1910

HISTORY OF PAPER CONT.

talked about column "Under the Town Clock." His tenure was interrupted by the outbreak of World War II when he entered the army. He served with distinction, receiving two wounds and a field commission as second lieutenant. Following the war, he returned to the newspaper business in Binghamton. In 1942 the Parish "Mirror" was absorbed and printed in Mexico.

World War II

Jack Higbee, a member of the editorial staff of the "Oswego Palladium-Times," agreed to fill in and on a part-time basis managed to produce an issue once a week. When Mr. Higbee accepted a position with the "Post-Standard" of Syracuse, his place was filled by E. H. Pierce of the high school faculty. During this period Arloine Backus, long time employee of the Independent Press, acted as on-the-spot editor along with her other duties in the job shop.

Through the war years newsprint became almost impossible to get and the Independent was forced to print on "ready print," which came already printed with syndicated material on one side. Thus the paper was forced into a four-page edition of local news and advertising. Manpower was as scarce as newsprint and although each subscriber received 52 copies of the paper a year, he did not necessarily receive one copy each week. Publication was sporadic but with the support of the publisher the Independent managed to weather the vicissitudes of shortages, government regulations, and irate advertisers. Mr. Backus made it a policy during the war years to mail a copy of each Independent to service men and women free of charge.

New Editors

In Feb. of 1948, Richard Peters came to the Independent from the paper in Adams and once again a real editor took over. He was the first of the new generation to have his name carried in the masthead. Each week he delivered copy to Camden, N. Y. where the paper was set because the help situation had not improved. Then came the laborious task of carting galleys of type back to Mexico and up the long stairs to the office to be "locked up" and run off on the old Cottrell hand-fed press. W. C. Stone, one of Henry Humphries' "boys," and retired publisher of the Camden "Advance" frequently returned with Mr. Peters and assisted in printing the paper.

Following Mr. Peter's departure, the fortunes of the local press were turned over to two young men, Richard T. Powers and Everet V. Backus. Mr. Peters', in his farewell editorial on April 13, 1950 said:

"For only the fifth time in 89 years, the editorship of the Mexico Independent will change hands. The next editor will find two young men at the editorial helm, Richard Powers of Petersburg, Indiana and Everet Backus, a native of this village, who will take over from Richard M. Peters, Editor Peters terminates his affiliation this week to become co-publisher of the Balston Spa Journal, Saratoga Co., N. Y."

(Mr. Peters later enrolled in law school in Texas and following his graduation entered the T.V. field).

Dual Control

On April 20, 1950 the Independent made its first appearance under the aegis of the new team, the advertising being handled by Mr. Backus and the editorial chores by Mr. Powers. In his first edition, Mr. Powers introduced himself editorially:

"Hello. I am Dick Powers. I am here to serve you from the editor's chair of the Independent. I'm to gather your news, record your births and deaths, and mark the important events in your lives. I hope to become a part of your community."

One of Editor Powers' first innovations was the introduction of the column which still appears on the front page. After a series of requests for a name, Billy Geibel's entry "Mexechos" was chosen. (A copy of one of those columns appears elsewhere in this edition.)

Papers Added

During the Powers' era "The Central Square Citizen," "The Phoenix Register," "The Brewerton Outlet," and "The North Shore News" were added to the printing list, making the combine known as The Oswego County Weeklies.

Mr. Powers left the Independent in Nov., 1952 to publish a paper of his own in Lowville, N. Y. Mrs. Rosanna Loucks was then employed to gather news and edit copy. She filled this spot when the Independent Press made its first move since 1869.

On August 20, 1953 in its ninty-second year of publication, the Independent appeared in a new form and from a new address. The form was an eight-column paper and the address was the new, modern cement block structure built on the site of the old band shell on the east side of North Jefferson street, the present home of the Independent Press and Oswego County Weeklies. Here the newspapers were first printed by the Goss Comet, flat bed, webb-type press. On Feb. 28, 1957, the eight-column paper gave way to the present tabloid size paper.

Mrs. Lucy H. Kio took over the editorship on October 29, 1953. Mrs. Kio, a life-long resident of Mexico, contributed many stories of the past history of Mexico and its institutions. She guided the fortunes of the weekly until the present editor, Mrs. Norma Smith, assumed the editorial duties in April, 1961.

In 1954, as a result of poor health, Mr. Backus consolidated his various activities into a corporation including himself and his four sons. Everet Backus was named first vice-president of Mexico Independent, Inc., with R. A. Backus continuing as president. Since that time the publisher of the paper has been The Mexico Independent, Inc.

The present staff, in addition to Everet Backus and Mrs. Smith, include: Rodney Hall, Advertising Manager; and Kenneth McKee, Harry Jamerson, Clarence Duell, Lee Chubb, Conrad Gregory, Donald Jacquin, Henry Meyer, and Donald McFee. Marjorie Jones is Bookkeeper.

"Mexican" Was Only Challenge To Independent

THE MEXICAN

On August 7, 1888, the only competition to Henry Humphries' Independent, The Mexican, carried in its second issue the following notes:

"Mexico has a second weekly which appeared for the first time on Tuesday, July 31. The Mexican is a quarto in form, presents a neat appearance and is published by Fred A. Thomas. Sandy Creek News."

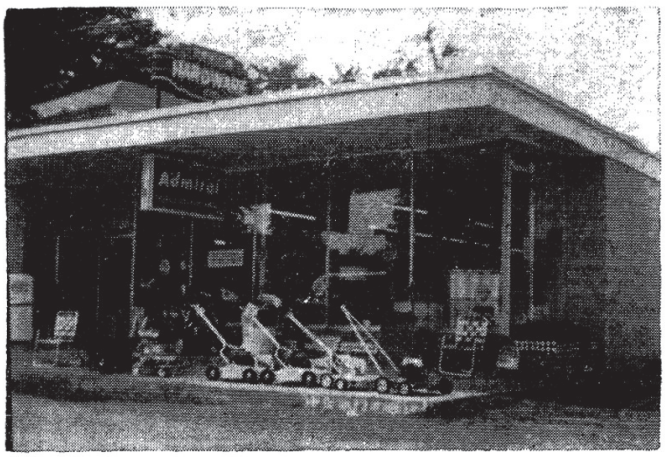
"We are in receipt of the first number of The Mexican, a new weekly Republican paper started at Mexico, N. Y., by Fred A. Thomas. It is an eight page paper, very tasty in make-up, newsy and spicey in tone. Oswego County Sun."

"We have received the first

Continued

Two Scenes of Rubble Left From Point Club Fire

Following the complete remodeling of the famous Frank Davis establishment by the Marano Brothers, fire destroyed a landmark that was known over a wide area of Oswego County.



Norge Appliances **Admiral TV**

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Lawn Mowers **Electrical Supplies**

Plumbing — Heating — Electrical Contracting

PARISH HARDWARE CO.

Phone NA 5-7521 **Parish, New York**

Arthur Berry, Famous Missionary Reviews Early Home Life Here

A frequent contributor of letters to the Independent about his experiences in Japan as a missionary, the Rev. Arthur D. Berry wrote in 1935 about his father John Berry and the work in the early days of the paper.

"The Independent owed the first fifty years of its life mostly to three persons-Mr. Humphries, my father, and Mrs. Baker. They were the Great Trio which carried the Independent along through the years. Others who worked in the office and went, but they went on seemingly forever!

"My father and mother and Elmer and my three sisters, as they came along into the home, lived in a log house. That log house has always had a romantic flavor in our family memories. It seemed to link us to the days of the pioneers. And my grandmother Sherman used to tell us stories of the Indans and wild animals she and her family used to be in contact with there in old Northern New York. She even taught us all how to count in Indian language.

"One day my father came into Mexico village and went up into the printing office. He said to the typsetters: 'That seems to be easy, let me do it' and they thinking he was some foolish fellow from the country, gave him the typeholder and told him to go ahead. And father started in and began to set type--to the astonishment of them all. Soon after that Mr. Humphries persuaded him to come to Mexico to live and work in the office. That was a momentous dcision for our family, for father was connected wtih the office for the next fifty years.

"My father and mother lived up on Canada Hill in the house just as the hill begins to slope down on the far side toward Union Square. They moved into the Downing house (The Worth Dygert residence) on South Jefferson Street. Then they bought the lot, where our house (now occupied by John Berry's great-grandson, John Fish) has been ever since, on Spring Street, and the little shack that stood there then. There I was born (1872) and my little sister Mary.

"But though our home was there on Spring Street all those fifty years, our family life was intimately tied to the printing office and the Independent. And that connection had great influence on our home life, for it brought into our home newspapers and magazines of all sorts which Mr. Humphries shared with father and Mrs. Baker.

"The hours of work were long and regular. My father went up to the office at seven, six days in the week and came home for the dinner hour at noon and went back and worked until six o'clock. Ten hours a day, for six days in the week--except for that blessed hour off Saturday afternoon when work stopped at five o'clock and father could come back home an hour earlier. That meant that we were all up eating breakfast before 6:30 in the morning summer and winter and always family prayers before that. And no furnaces in those days and not even coal stoves at first but a fresh wood fire built each morning to thaw out the frozen atmosphere. We children used to jump out of bed cold winter mornings in the dark, grab our clothes, and rush downstairs to dress around that one wood fire in the kitchen.

"And the pay was small. I don't know what the foreman of a printing office in America gets now for the hours he works each day, but I know what the foreman of a printing office got in those good old days, who worked ten hours a day, a foreman to whom could be entrusted the whole responsibility and management of the office when the editor and proprietor would go off to stay six months or a year in England. He got just ten dollars a week--and sometimes when the proprietor was away and he had the whole responsibility, he got ten dollars and a half a week. And with that pay he brought up five children and we had a very happy life. But my mother had a great deal to do with his being able to work that miracle.

"This does not mean that Mr. Humphries was a hard employer. That was the way things were in those days. And Mr. Humphries had a heart of gold and his kindnesses were many. He was a truly remarkable man.

"In those days farmers paid for their subscriptions with wood and other products of their farm--and we had to take wood on father's wages. But farmers had a pleasanter custom than that. They would bring in their choicest products--maple syrup or big apples or extraordinary specimens of vegetables as gifts to the editor and the editor would share them with the office force.

"I worked in the office myself. First I had to go up every Wednesday morning and help fold papers as they were printed from the old steam press. The Independent in those days was of monstrous size and it took the fartherest reach of my boyish arms to fold the paper--and there were hundreds and hundreds to fold. I used to be excused from old No. 7 school to do this work each Wednesday forenoon. Then later, though the exact dates are vague in my memory. I worked regularly in the printing office for a time. I learned to set type and distribute type and help in the other jobs about the office. That is, I became a printer's devil for a time.

"Never shall I forget the office and the three old rooms up at the top of those long, long steep stairs. The two smaller rooms in front, the one where we did type-setting and where visitors were welcomed, and the other supposed to be the editor's special sanctum, a room always in unutterable confusion. The back room seemed immense, where the press thundered and shook the floor and the walls were plastered deep with fascinating old handbills and programs of concerts and circuses and oratorios and auctions and all sorts of other doings in Mexico and surrounding country.

"If Mr. Humphries was a remarkable man, Mrs. Baker was a remarkable lady and a very dear lady. It is only lately that the chain of her friendship here on earth has been broken. All the recollection of my boyhood days is sweetened with the memory of these two fine people, Mr. Humphries and Mrs. Baker."

March 24, 1938:—

Robert Roach, son of Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Roach of this village, who has been enrolled in the CCC camp at Coeur D' Alene, Idaho, since the latter part of last Sept. returned home here on Wednesday afternoon.

Mr. Roach reported that other Mexico boys in the camp,

Continued

The Mexican

number of The Mexican. Very neat. It will support Harrison and Morton. Oswego Palladium."

Short Lived

In 1931 Mr. Thomas wrote the following letter to the foreman of the Independent:

San Francisco, Cal.
April 17, 1931

Arthur B. KeHogg
Mexico Independent
Mexico, New York
Dear Mr. Kellogg:

I have been a subscriber to The Independent for a great many years, leaving Mexico about thirty years ago. I used to publish a paper called "The Mexico Republican" almost across the street from the old Independent office in the Thomas store. It came out weekly on a Tuesday but later on, it came out tri-weekly, ie, try one week and get it out the next. Later on we moved the plant to Oswego, N. Y., where we did a very nice business until we sold out to one of the political parties.

The writer wishes to compliment you on the makeup of the Independent of April 2nd. Your front page and in fact the whole paper is a great improvement and I am quite sure that the people of Mexico will appreciate what you have done and will do in the future.

Wiht best wishes to Mr.

First Boy Scout Troop 1911

Row 1: Lovell Cook, Ralph Shumway, Rev. George F. Shepherd, Giles Denny, Harry Letson, Leonard Preman.
Row 2: Lloyd Denny, Harold Dunning, George Fravor, Dailes Preeman, Fred Miles, Fred Coe, Lewis Parmenter Howard Norton, Oliver Newcomb, Stuart Daniels, Ralph Stevens.
Row 3: Holland Smith, Court Mowry, Hayward Pettingill, Harry Fish, Henry Sternberg, Leon Brown

Odd Names For Districts

November 3, 1938:—

The Northwest area of the village near the lower mills was called "Toad Hollow." It acquired the name, according to Carl Gillett, because once upon a time when Adelbert Caswell, Homer Ames and William Adams were standing on the bridge over the mill stream, one of them wrote in red chalk on the bridge "Toad Hollow." The name attached itself to that section for many years. (The section referred to is the area around the bridge crossing the creek on Academy (Mill) street just south of Putnam's cider mill.)

The part of the Colosse road just south of Ward Castle's house was called Dublin because the Gleason and Tully families had homes there.

For: Leizer

Fort Leizer: Was there ever a fort there? One story is that it was a snow fort defended by the pupils of the school against their "enemies" from another district. The Rev. W. S. Goodell in his autobiography gives another explanation. He says that the name was given by a "tramp soldier" who had served in Florida in the Seminole War. This district needed either a new schoolhouse or extensive repairs on the old one. Two factions arose but the one favoring repairs out-voted the other. After this decision one voter proposed to alter the boundaries of the district so as to prevent further action toward repairing. An appeal was made to the State Department of Education. After a long struggle and many school meetings, the original boundaries were kept unchanged.

The "tramp soldier" had served in a fort known as Fort Leizer, noted for the many times it was captured and recaptured by the opposing forces. Being present when the final vote was taken in regard to the school district, he shouted, "Fort Leizer forever!" and the name has continued to this day.

Another Version

Aletter from Estella Cole Ballard to the Independent gives still another version of the name:

. . . "In regard to how Ft. Leizer (as it is now spelled) was named, I have another version as related by my grandmother, Sally Roberts Midlam, who was born in 1812 in the Vera Cruz settlement on the shore of Lake Ontario.

When a young girl she with her brother, the late Orville Roberts attended school at Fort Leazer, going from their home by boat to what is now Texas and then following marked trees through the forest to this school, which she told of being located there through the efforts of two men, one named Mr. Fort and the other "Leazer" (Ebenezer) Everts. They had much opposition but Fort and Leazer won out and their opponents always referred to the school as Fort and Leazer's school. Thus the name

lage has for years been referred to as "The Bloody Seventh". The number in the epithet results from the fact that in the numbering of school districts, the area west of Black Creek was designated as No. 7. However, no one ventures to explain the "Bloody" part of the term.

Canada

The area east of Salmon Creek was once known as "Canada." The explanation for this is in the fact that the name "Toronto" was given to the Thomas grist mill on that side of he stream. The saw mill on the west side was called "State Mill."

This little number illustrated above sold for $1.00 in 1908. Advertising promised, "Positive reduction of one to five inches", and stated that this "corset" was for "large women" and to improve the figure of "over developed" women.

Today's women would rather go on a diet than wear the combination of whalebone and steel "stays" and the tight lacing practised in the period 60 years ago.

Yes, the trend in fashions is toward more comfort than freedom for women. DARROHN'S in PULASKI have QUALITY CLOTHING AND GIFTWARES—For both men and women, in tune with the times.

Shop at—

Darrohn's **in Pulaski**

Specialties - Gifts

Where Quality Means Economy

BANK SERVES FOR 42 YEARS

On March 29, 1924 the State Bank of Parish opened for business in its new building erected on the corner of Main and Railroad streets. The new building was constructed on the double lot where formerly had stood the Emmet Lewis block which was destroyed by fire on Nov. 29, 1922 along with the Odd-Fellows Temple.

The present building, now called the Parish Branch of the First Trust and Deposit Company of Syracuse, replaces the old bank building which is pictured on the next page. During the time of rebuilding, banking business was carried on in the public library.

Hadwin C. Fuller organized the old State Bank in Parish and was named the first cashier. The bank opened for business on July 1, 1919. Mr. Fuller began in the banking business in 1912 with the First National Bank of Central Square as bookkeeper, later being promoted to assistant cashier.

His career was interrupted in 1918 when he entered Army service, serving nine months at Camp Devens, Mass. He was then transferred to Officers' Training Camp at Washington, D.C. On opening day the bank's resources were listed at $82,519.27. On Mar. 10, 1924 re-

vice president, B. J. Morgan; cashier, H. C. Fuller; asst. cashier, J. L. Seigert.

Directors were: James Gray, retired merchant; B. J. Morgan, druggist; H. A. Mosher, retired; R. S. Davey, dentist; F. A. Church, merchant; W. B. Harter, merchant; W. C. Richards, merchant.

Gail Davey, who began her employment with the old bank even before it opened for bus-

serves as asistant manager.

Mr. Fuller was later elected to Congress representing the old Oswego- Oneida District. He served two terms in the House of Representatives.

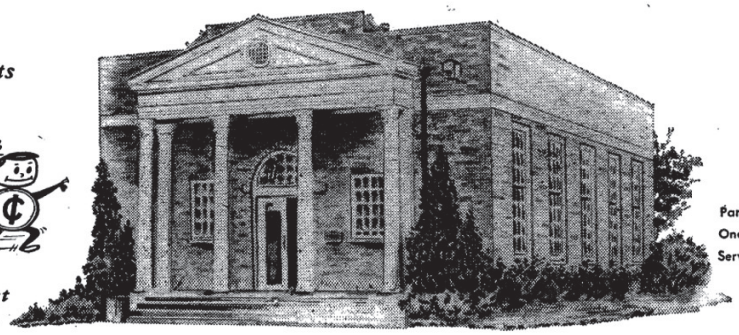
On Feb. 2, 1946 the State Bank was reorganized and became First Trust's Parish branch. George N. Frank was named manager, a position he maintains at the present time.

At the time of the change Glenn G. Harter was president

(Continued on next page)

Good Sense!
For Dollars and Cents

See First Trust First



Parish Office
One of 24 Convenient Offices
Serving Your Financial Needs

"EXCELLENT SERVICE" THE MOTTO

The Mexico Independent, during the past 100 years, has continually served the best interests of the citizens of its community. Staunch, sturdy and with a true American Spirit, the Independent has forthrightly given excellent service to all.

The First Trust office in Parish, though not so genially "old" as the Independent, constantly strives to do as well for our friends and neighbors. We offer over 100 banking services. All of them are geared to the exacting financial needs of the people in this area.

We rejoice with the Mexico Independent on this, its 100TH ANNIVERSARY. As an advertiser and as readers, we are proud to add our hearty congratulations for the Independent's envied record of Excellent Service.

George N. Frank
Manager, Parish Office,
part of the team of First Trust personnel
dedicated to your personal banking service.

FIRST TRUST
& DEPOSIT COMPANY
MEMBER FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK
24 CONVENIENT OFFICES

MORE LOCAL HISTORY TOLD IN REPORT TO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ver, Earl Church, Fred Baker and H. C. Fuller. J. S. Spaid was secretary and Fritz Holmes, cashier.

A unique bank service is the "Farmers' Bulletin Board." Here any farmer may place his "for sale" or "wanted to buy" notices free of charge. The bank also contributes to better farming in the area by awarding prizes to boys and girls for farm activities.

The present bank staff, in order of their starting to work, consists of the following: Gail Davey, assistant manager, 1919; George N. Frank, manager, 1946; Ada Gehm, teller, Feb. 1949; Charles Mosely, farm representative, Feb. 1958; John White, assistant manager, Mar. 1958; Carol Getz, teller, Jan. 1960; Maryann Mowers, Oct. 1960; Alfreda La Prate, April 1960; Lavina Van Epps, Mar. 1961; Rosemary Johnson, May 1961.

The bank staff wishes to thank the people of Mexico - Parish area for friendly business relations all these years. Mr. Frank as spokesman for the group says, "We trust we can continue to grow and serve you even better in the future. We shall try very hard to be the Bank of Personal Service."

State Bank of Parish

Bank building on site of present First Trust and Deposit building destroyed by fire in 1922

Wednesday, August 5, 1891:—

Last Saturday two strangers claiming to hail from Syracuse drove into town and put their horse and carriage in the Boyd House stable. They professed to be collecting for the Singer sewing machine company and told a comparatively straight story. Their actions, however, aroused the suspicions of our deputy sheriff, W. S. Sweetland, and he became quite watchful of their movements. The men wanted to dispose of the carriage and tried to sell it to Edmund Potter but failed. Mr. Sweetland was very much of the opinion that they were "crooks," and hoping to get some evidence against them talked with them about buying the horse. They declined to sell but their manner was such that Sweetland told the man in charge not to let the rig go. The fellows went into the hotel and were followed by the sheriff. He waited in the reading room for them to return from the bar room, but they didn't come back and stepping out doors he saw them walking down Railroad street. There were not suspiciuos circumstances enough to cause their arrest so he let them go. Late in the afternoon he received a telegram inquiring about the men and stating the rig was stolen from a party in Syracuse. The owner came on Monday and got the rig and is indebted to Mr. Sweetland's vigilance for the recovery of his property.

NOTED LECTURER COMING

June 25, 1931:—

Pussyfoot Johnson will give a lecture in the Methodist Episcopal church Tuesday night. Mr. Johnson is renouned as a temperance enthusiast and is a world traveller. He has but one eye, having lost the other when a rock was hurled at him during one of his lectures, but he has remarkable insight to world politics.

Wednesday, April 24, 1901:—
GLEANINGS FROM LOCAL HISTORY

The following paper was read before the Historical Society on Thursday afternoon by Mrs. M. A. Peck of this village.

In the year 1790 Mr. Scriba, a merchant from New York and a native of Holland, purchased of the government a tract of five hundred thousand acres of land, at sixteen cents per acre, containing what is now Oswego county and a part of Oneida. From Oneida county and farther east, families began to move toward Lake Ontario and the military trading post which has grown to be the city of Oswego. Mexico was then a town of Herkimer county and included most of the present counties of Oswego, Jefferson, Lewis and a portion of Oneida county. Mr. Scriba thought to establish a city on the shore of Lake Ontario, a few miles from here. He built a hotel, a store and six houses. Upon Salmon Creek there was a saw mill and flour mill. The promised city was destroyed by fire in 1820.

In 1804 several families came to this unbroken wilderness from Connecticut and Massachusetts, with ox teams over almost impassable roads, cut down timber and made them log houses, without windows or door; cultivated the land which yielded them abundant crops. They were without good roads, or mills, and it was not easy to convert their wheat into flour or their corn into meal, so their grain was carried in bags on horseback to Camden, or in a row boat to Salmon Creek.

The cemetery (west of Calvin Tiffanys, now called Primitive cemetery) was founded at an early date (1809), Mr. Scriba giving the ground and Mr. Cole (Samuel) was the first person buried in that cemetery. He was a Mason and was buried with Masonic honors.

Mason's First Home

Shubal Alfred erected the first frame house in this place in 1807 (the Arthur residence on the west hill) and it is still occupied as a dwelling place. The first Masonic Lodge of Mexico was organized in the upper room of that house. The floor was of rough boards and not nailed so when the lodge held its meetings, Mr. Alfred's wife and children were ordered down to the cellar and the trap door closed, that inquisitive ears could not hear what transpired.

The first public work which they undertook was the opening of highways, then the establishment of schools and the organizing of churches. At a special town meeting held June 3, 1813, commissioners of common schools were chosen, and a vote taken to raise by tax for the use of common schools sixty dollars. Mexico then included within its territory the present towns of Parish and New Haven.

War of 1812

Our country was at this time engaged in a fierce conflict with Great Britain. The struggle, beginning in 1812, was now at its highest. On May 3, 1814, the British invest Oswego. The American commander, seeing further resistance hopeless, surrenders. Signal men had been appointed from station to station along the line to Rome. The settlers of Mexico are listening with breathless interest, hour after hour, to the sounds of conflict borne on the wind from Oswego. At last the rear of cannon ceases. For awhile all is still. Then upon the throbbing air comes the report of three musket discharges, fired in quick succession. Sherman Hosmer and Shubal Alfred step to the center of the street and fire three muskets; in a few moments three distinct reports are heard from the east: It is the signal off defeat and disaster traveling from Oswego to Rome by the best system of telegraphy known to them. In a few days the whole settlement is electrified with the glorious news that the English force has been entrapped and, after a bloody fight, every man taken by our troops, at little Sandy Creek.

Schools Built

Only a month and a day from the attack on Oswego the men of Mexico assembled again in special town meeting and voted to raise for common school purposes double the amount which shall be raised by the state. Next year the vote is to raise three times the amount appropriated, also that the supervisor of said town raise for the use of common schools the largest sum which is allowed by law. During the winter of 1819-20, John Howard was employed as teacher in the Alfred District (what is now the village of Mexico). He conceived the idea of erecting a building two stories high and grading the school, the ordinary district school to be kept in the lower room while the upper story should be devoted to the purpose of a high school (at the southwest corner of the present lot). Subscriptions were secured, payable in labor and material.

Logs were cut and drawn to the mill and preparations made for burning brick. So great was the undertaking for the small number engaged, that the walls were not completed until December was well advanced. So severe was the weather that some refused to work in the mortar bed or on the building. The weather became intensely cold. The walls were up, but not roofed, and there was great danger that the mortar would be injured by the frost; that all the toil of a year might come to naught. Captain Leonard Ames, with ready wit sufficient for any emergency, called the men and boys and soon the sounds of saws and axes were heard; then the whirr and crash, and thud of great trees falling. These were cut into logs; the logs were drawn by oxen, while the limbs were piled upon sledges or carried upon shoulders to the front of the building. One team was unyoked, driven singly through the door, then yoked upon the inside, and with lengthened chain the large logs were drawn into the building. There they were rolled with a shout and hurrah into a pile in the centre, limbs and dry wood piled among them and fired. Many farmers from the surrounding country drew loads of sled-length wood from their farms. Mr. Dennis Peck heated water in the caldron kettle with which to make mortar to carry up the gable ends. When night came on Captain Ames detailed companies of young men with the injunction, "Boys, whenever the fire burns low, roll in more logs; pile on more limbs." Thus day after day and night after night that fire was kept burning, crackling roaring, until the walls were dry.

First Academy

The building was soon completed (1822). Each story contained a single room. Its huge fireplace in the north end, with back log and fore log and blazing stick, warms the room below, reinforced by a good box stove at the opposite end, while box stoves do duty above. The building was 24 by 36 ft.

John Howard was installed teacher of the high school. Laura Fish was the first preceptress. After leaving Mexico she was married to a physician who had offered his services to the American Board of Foreign Missions, and later went to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii).

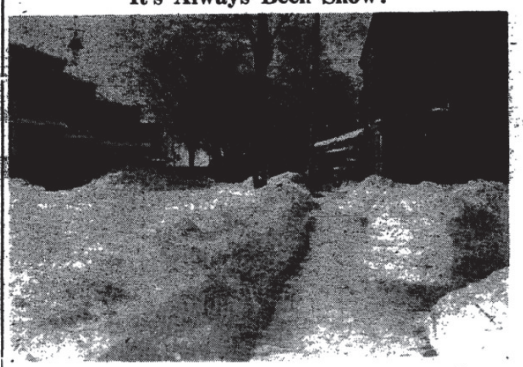
Before the first year of our school was ended people began to call it the Academy, and it was named Rensselaer Oswego Academy. In 1835 Rev. George G. Hapgood entered upon his duties as principal, remaining five years and then going to Cazenovia as principal of the seminary in that town. He now (with the larger part of his family) rests in our quiet cemetery. During the first year of his stay here the school outgrew the accomodations afforded, as many students were attracted from abroad, and many measures were taken for erecting the second academy building.

Second Building

In 1836 a wooden structure, 28 x 56 feet, and three stories high, was erected immediately in front of and adjoining the old brick building. Many of its students have risen to posts of responsibility in the halls of

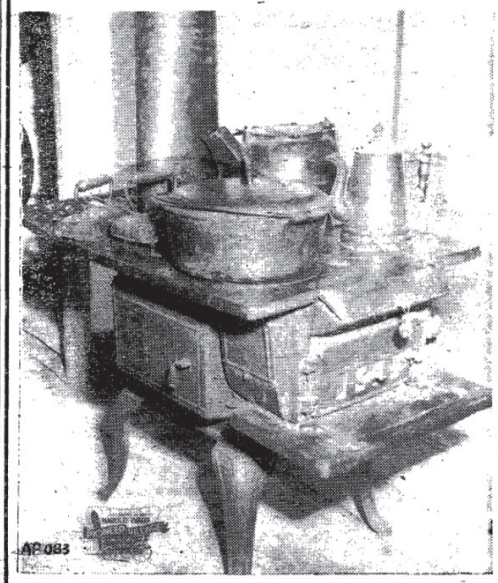
(Continued on next page)

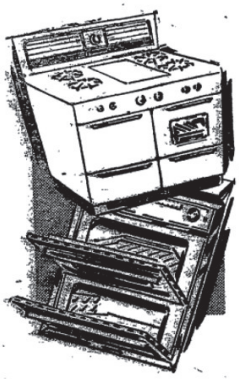
It's Always Been Snow!



Corner of Main and North Jefferson Street with snow piled high; Peck's clothing store shown at right.

Housewife's Pride In 1900





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GLEANINGS LOCAL HISTORY

legislation, both state and national. In 1845 the name of Rensselaer Oswego Academy was changed by act of legislature to Mexico Academy. In 1855 the old brick building was taken down, and the present (1928) edifice erected on its site. (In Nov. 14, 1918 the 1836 Academy was burned completely except for the bell). In 1930 the 1855 building was razed, its white marble tablet preserved on the corrider wall of the present or fifth Academy building.) while school went on as usual in the frame portion, which remained standing in front.

Mr. J. R. French, a graduate of the academy and late dean of Syracuse University, was principal of the school at this time and was a classmate of ex-Lieut. Gov. Allen C. Beach. In the fall, this portion having been sold to Mr. Miller, he had its lower story cut away, to make it portable, and it was removed to the site where it now stands, and has been used all these years as a carriage manufactory. (The site was just east of the present high school.) In 1895 the districts in this place were merged into a high school, so now we have the common school, the high school and academic departments.

First Celebration

One of the happiest events in Mexico was the fiftieth anniversary of the academy, which was held August 23-24, 1876. A mammoth tent was erected on land owned by Mrs. Harriet Rundell, (a daughter of Captain Leonard Ames) adjoining the academy grounds, and former students, teachers and officers gathered there from all over the country. At the hour for opening, bells rang, whistles blew, salutes were fired, and a band, discoursing inspiriting music paraded the streets. Judge Kinney of Iowa, a former student, presided. It closed with a banquet, when hundreds of people were seated at the long rows of heavily laden tables, surmounted by tasteful evergreen arches, while a rich profusion of flowers, a flood of light from innumerable reflectors and candeliers, all combined to make the scene beautiful. At the banquet Rev. Henry Kendall, D.D. of New York, secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions, presided. Dr. Kendall was the oldest student.

Churches

The first church of this place was of the Congregational order and was organized in Shubal Alfred's barn by Rev. Simon Waterman, who was in the employ of the Connecticut Missionary Society, and consisted of seven women, and had not even one man for the office of deacon, or other offices of trust and honor. Those godly and heroic women were Mrs. Shubal Alfred, Mrs. Mary Wheeler, Mrs. Rebecca Mathews, Mrs. Sarah Beebe, Mrs. Eunice Williams, Mrs. Merriam Southworth, Mrs. Hannah Hosmer. These seven women immediately organized themselves into a praying band, and were wont to meet once every week for prayer until the infirmities of age rendered it impossible.

Methodist Church

About the year of 1808 or 1809 Mr. Huestis, a young Methodist preacher, made his appearance in Mexico, mounted on his horse, with a portmanteau and saddle-bags containing his wardrobe and Bible and hymn book. Feeling that God had called him to preach the Gospel, he was in search of a standpoint from which he might call the people to repentance and hold forth to them the Word of Life.

The Presbyterians having organized a society previous, were holding a meeting at that time, which attracted his attention. He dismounted and walked in. After the close of the service he inquired of them if there were any Methodists in the vicinity. A woman present said she had heard a neighbor say she was a Methodist, and directed him to her house, where he met a cordial reception. That Methodist woman was Mrs. Minerva Ames, the wife of Captain Leonard Ames. Their house became the first Methodist preaching place here and home for the itinerant. This appointment was included in the Black River circuit, which embraced nearly the whole of the Black River country, and at that time was in Cayuga District, in New York Conference. William Case was the presiding

Corner of Mill and Main Streets

The old McQueen place, later converted to gas station by Beanie Davis, presently operated by Maud and Hattie Davis. In the background is the Preman home, now owned by Bill Preman.

An Argument

At one time when Mr. Heustis was preaching he made a remark that displeased a woman belonging to another church. She arose and contradicted him in the midst of his discourse. He made no reply, but proceeded as if nothing had happened. After the preacher sat down, a man by the name of Calkins gave an exhortation. He was so boisterous as to offend some present, and one Murdock, a hotel keeper, interrupted him by asking him why he bellowed and shouted so, if he supposed God or his hearers were deaf? Mr. Ames interposed by saying, "I invited these men to preach in my house, and they shall have the privilege of preaching and talking in their own way without interruption."

The first class was organized in Mr. Ames's house, and consisted of five members, namely, Mrs. Leonard Ames, Mr. Calkins, Mr. Chesbro, and W. Armstrong, class leader.

First Communion

The first quarterly meeting was held in Mr. Ames's house, the first Love Feast, and the first Sacrament was administered to eight communicants in the bed room. This is the table upon which the emblems of the dying love of Christ were placed, around which gathered Rev. C. Huestis, preacher in charge, William Case, Presiding Elder, Wm. Armstrong, class leader, Mrs. Leonard Ames, Mr. Place, Mr. Calkins, Mr. Chesbro, and Miss Sarah Meiggs. This table was presented to Mexico Methodist Church by Mrs. Lewis Miller, a grand daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Ames, (The table is still preserved by the church).

The second pastor was Rev. S. Rowley, from Baltimore. He was of a wealthy family, and had a good standing, equipage,

(Continued next page)

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Oswego, N. Y.

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GLEANINGS LOCAL HISTORY

was well dressed, had a silver buckle with which he fastened his cloak, also a silver-mounted riding whip. Much murmuring arose about this, so to relieve the tender consciences he gave away the silver buckle and tore the silver mounting from his whip. When chided for yielding to such whims, he meekly replied he did not wish to do anything to hurt the feelings of his brethren.

There were but two circuits in all the Black River country, Black River and Mexico. Mexico circuit extended from Redfield and Camden to the Oswego River. In 1811 Mr. Ira Fairbanks was appointed to the Mexico circuit. He received 25 dollars that year on his salary, and said he left the circuit out of debt.

A Controversy

The Methodists had a Quarterly Meeting appointed to be held in the two-story brick school house. The Love Feast they usually held in the upper room. The trustees were expecting to take down the fireplaces and put in stoves in the fall. Now was an opportunity to play a trick upon the noisy Methodists; so, though it was not necessary to pull down the chimney, yet a day or two before the appointed time some parties, to show their zeal in opposing the sect everywhere spoken against, went and tumbled them partly down, scattering the brick and mortar over the floor, rendering it entirely unfit for religious service. Mr. Orson Ames, son of Leonard Ames, though not a religious man, feeling indignant at the ungracious act, said, "Here is my tannery, and here is my lumber. Turn in a half dozen and seat it, and fit it up for your meeting." So they did, and had a good time. Opposition turned out for the advancement of Methodism. The legal society of the Methodist Episcopal Church was organided in 1833. We can find no record of the organization, but at a meeting of trustees, Feb. 11, 1834 there were present Simon Tullar, Leonard Ames, Orin Whitney, Daniel Austin, Eldad Smith, Reuben Halladay, Stanton Kenyon, O. C. Whitney.

First Church

A church was built of brick in 1835, on Main street, a little west of the house now owned by Miss Fannie Thomas. In 1839 it was voted in the trustee meeting that they build a parsonage on the society lot. April 15, 1840, at a meeting of the trustees of M. E. Church, Henry Austin, Orin Whitney and Ranslo Alfred were chosen as a committee to build a parsonage house. Rev. Burroughs Holmes became pastor of the Mexico Charge. At that time the financial condition was somewhat confused and unsatisfactory, but by the counsel and aid of the leading members he succeeded in uniting the church and congregation on a plan that cleared the society of debt, and during the second year arrangements were made for building a parsonage, which is now included in the upright part of the house occuped by Miss Thomas. In 1842 Mr. Holmes was stationed here for the third time, but found that differences exisited among the membership which caused him much painful anxiety, labor and prayer. But the Lord wonderfully helped him to settle the disturbance, and a great work of grace came upon the people. After five weeks of revival work in the Methodist church the meetings were transferred to the Baptist church, from thence, after three weeks to the Presbyterian church. The addition to the membership of the Methodist church, as the fruit of his revival was 130. Rev. Mr. Graham of the Baptist church and Rev. Mr. Whiting of the Presbyterian church rendered valuable service at this time.

Church Burned

In 1851 the Brick Church was destroyed by fire, after which the people worshipped in the Town Hall, over the store owned by Mr. B. B. Stone and Mr. Seabury Tuller, which stood where Mr. Simpson's store now stands (now the Corner Grocery). An effort was soon made to erect another house of worship. The result was that a new lot was bought and the following year this church was completed during the pasorate of Rev. Ebenezer Arnold. Additions have been made from time to time as necessities have required until it has reached its present proportions. Commencing with a membership of five, we have registered as high as 400. Our present number is 274. While we have varied in membership, two other churches have been organized by people removing from this church. Our Sunday School numbers, teachers and scholars, 231. The Epworth League and the Junior League have a place here, also the Brotherhood of St. Paul. The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society is thirty years old. The Home Missionary Society came a few years later. In 1845 the Black River Conference was held in Mexico, July 9-19, Bishop Hedding presiding, Rev Gardiner Baker, secretary. The Sunday service was held in an apple orchard, about one half mile west of this village, where the deacons and elders were ordained. The Northern New York Conference convened in the house on April 28 to May 5, 1875, Bishop Scott presiding, Rev. Sidney O. Barnes, secretary.

Fifty-two pastors have ministered to these people on holy things. Only ten are now living.

Big Wind In 1950 Still Remembered

November 30, 1950:—

Mexico, along with the rest of the eastern half of the United States, is still talking about and patching up after the worst windstorm within memory. Damage, in the township alone, was estimates to reach $50,000. Residents of the town and village, however, have been giving their thanks all week that damage was not more serious and that no personal injuries were suffered.

Near-hurricane winds started Friday night and reached their peak during Saturday night. Most people prepared themselves with makeshift light and sought out heat, at least to prepare their meals. The storm created an intense feeling of fellowship and neighborliness throughout and after the big blow and people went out of their way to help the fellow next door in his troubles.

The greatest property damage in the village was done to the home of Arthur Schick on West Main street where two large poplar trees, belonging to Mrs. Flora Clifford, were blown down, one crushing the roof and one side of the home and the other blocking Route 104.

Two of the first houses to be hit by the wind in the village were those of District Attorney James Feeney on North Jefferson street and Dr. G. A. Freund on Main street. Mr. Feeney's roof started to roll back before the wind early Saturday morning, finally taking the chimney with it. The house was also struck by a falling tree. Dr. Freund's lawn was littered by a huge tree the first thing Saturday morning and the roof succumbed to the wind later in the afternoon, part of it landing about 50 yards away in front of the Catholic Church.

Alice Lilly, Main street, lost part of the roof of her home as did Harry Vorce from his house on Spring street. The Central Garage roof was shedding bricks and fragments throughout the storm.

On Pulaski Hill the wind took a extra special holiday, completely blocking off Pulaski street, sending trees into the Leland Hadcock home, the Theo Walton home, and all others in that area.

Mr. Richard V. Backus' henhouse was demolished and the Harry Stone home was barely missed by two of the seven large pine trees that were felled by the wind.

In the Mexico cemetery at least 25 trees were down and across the street from the cemetery the wind toppled the smoke stack of the Scott and Glenister Steam Laundry taking a cornice of the building.

Scenic Avenue was blocked off completely Saturday night and was patrolled by village policeman, Harold Geibel and two special deputies. On North Jefferson street two giant trees fell on both sides of the Crandall and Pulsifer homes, missing both.

Two near misses were reported where only luck prevented persons from getting hurt. Billy Meeks got off his bicycle to go into Sachel's and a telephone pole fell hitting the bike. John Forbes reported seeing a woman and child just being missed by a falling tree in front of his home.

Mexico firemen were called out three times Saturday afternoon, twice answering calls where electric light wires had snapped and ignited grass. A chimney fire at the home of Howard Frey occurred about noon Saturday. Firemen, hampered by the lack of an alarm system, stood by at the firehall all night Saturday, sleeping on the floor.

Tuesday, three days after the start of the storm, electricity was still out on Church and Liberty streets and a few other areas in the village. Street lights were still out all over the village Tuesday night.

Mexico's Water System First Opened in 1913; Supply Increased Old Water Tank

MEXICO WATER SYSTEM

Mexico water system was commenced in 1912 and completed in 1913. The mains were laid in trenches dug by hand, and piped water to the village from springs on the Pump House road just north of the old Reeves farm (now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Harry Wilcox). The total cost of the system was $56,000. The first water commssioners were W. J. Collins, E. E. Hollister, and F. D. Stone.

During the years since its inauguration, many additions and extensions have been made to the system. In 1931 or 1932, it was realized that Mexico was sorely in need of a better water supply and Dr. E. A. Mowry, mayor of the village pushed the project of additional supply. Finally Harry Andrews, city engineer of Fulton, was called in consultation. The result was that three acres of land, including two springs, was purchased from Mary Matoski, including right of way over her land from the highway to the springs, located about one-quarter of a mile from the old pump house.

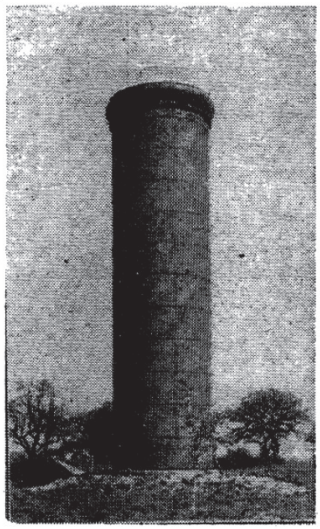
On the new site was built a new pump house over a 42-foot deep well on one of the springs. An automatic pump, electrically operated, maintained constant pressure in the system. Started in operation in 1934, the new system cost $12,000.

New Supply Needed

A severe drought and additional demands on the system, caused the village board, which had recently abolished the water board and assumed responsibility, to search for a new supply. After the erection of a new stand pipe in 1950, a booster station was added to the system in 1954. Again in 1956 and 1958 two new wells and pumps were added to supply the growing demand. A complete water survey of the entire area had failed to reveal a better source of water and the new supply was taken from the already owned village site. All of this action was done in the administration of Mayor Lewis Kellogg.

Edward Parker was the first superintendent of the new system and continued for five years.

Alvin Richardson became supervisor of the system and remained at the job until his retirement in 1955. Francis Smithers took over the duties in 1955. He was followed by the present superintendent, Virgil Sutliff.



The first resevoir tank erected at the time Mexico's original system was installed in 1913, with Ed Parker as first commissioner. The tank had a capacity of about 140,000 gallons, about half of the new tank on the same location.

Mexechos

One of the early Mexechoes Columns written by Dick Powers at the time of the 1950 wind storm.

The mutual expression Sunday morning was on everyone's face . . it spelled "Whew." Jim Feeney was trying to peddle a second hand roof . .. Mexico was like a resort town with short tours viewing the sights all morning . . . the firemen who stood by for an emergency all Saturday night were bleary eyed, but thankful no fires had broken out . . . they all answered the false alarm at nine o'clock when the power came on and sounded the siren . . . the churches of the village were populated with the people giving thanks that damage was limited to property and no one got hurt . . . From the office window Sunday morning little groups stood around in the cold clear November Sabbath and compared wreckage . . . two television aerials stand on the roof of Giovo's and the PCA building with a sort of defiant "Ha" attitude . . . glass litters Main street from the broken window in Giovo's apartment. . bricks litter North Jeff street from the chimney on Leepy's building . . . it's funny how a

(Continued on next page)

Even a duck wouldn't pay bills this way

But *people* still do. In all kinds of weather, they run around toting precious cash . . . stand in line to pay bills, buy money orders. All this, when a checking account makes it easy to pay bills by mail, with cancelled checks as legal proof of payment.

You can get off the money-go-round by opening a checking account at Lincoln Bank. Whether you write few or many checks, there's an account to fit your needs. It's part of Lincoln's *complete* banking service. Stop in soon and let our checks run your errands.

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Writes On 75th Birthday

RIPPLING WATERS

Column which appeared in the Mexico Independent on Thursday, March 21, 1935 on the paper's 75 anniversary.

Written by the Rev. Barber L. Waters while he was pastor of the Mexico Methodist church, this column was one of the most popular ever carried by the Independent.

Seventy-five years is a nice age to attain. To live through these many years is a great accomplishment, and to live them with honor a greater one. Therefore, all loyal citizens extend to the Mexico Independent their heartiest congratulations.

Think of the joys and the sorrows this weekly paper has left within the pages of life! It began its existence by reporting sadly, one by one, the secession of the southern states, and the adoption of a constitution by the "Confederacy."

With brave type it reported the enlistment of the boys in blue who marched bravely away to the tune of "John Brown's Body" under the unfurled banner of the Red, White and Blue.

And then with sad and mournful type it lamented the loss of many a gallant lad who had fallen at Antietam or Gettysburg, a sacrifice nobly made for the Union and for freedom.

In these early days it gave the community of Mexico the news of the nation, the program and the doings of President Lincoln. Men gathered in groups in stores and shops gravely contemplating the affairs of the world, while some readers proclaimed the "march of time" from the columns of this servant of the community.

The Mexico Independent did more than lament with its readers; it rejoiced with them in their victories, and laughed with them in their amusements. There was the gala holiday when Frank Davis, a southerner, was going to walk a wire that was swung across the mill dam down by Dexter's Mill. A large crowd of merry-makers had gathered on the bridge to see the performance. Just as Professor Davis appeared the bridge gave away and Mexico's most curious citizens found themselves in twelve feet of Black Creek water. Frank LaRobardiere was a young man then. He was hurrying from his home in the country to the village where he could witness the acrobatic wonder of the day. He just managed to get on the bridge and it toppled down. I wonder if he still remembers the exciting experience?

I presume the activities of the young people have ever been faithfully reported--how, perhaps, Spencer Ramsey dressed in his choker collar, a checkered suit and with pant guards about his ankles rode his bicycle along the dusty highway to Watertown or with the chores early done, rode it into Mexico to call on his best girl.

Presumably it has pictured Earl Brown as he must have looked in his linen duster and his gauntlet gloves driving his new automobile around and around the village streets, waiting for the gasoline to be exhausted, hollering "Whoa!" at every corner, because he didn't know how to stop the pesky thing.

It was reported the pretty weddings, Mary in her silk gown with the Bismark epaulets and glorious with brushes, and John with his cutaway coat and his greased hair flattened to his head in a figure "8" flourish. It pronounced the blessing of Heaven upon them all.

And there was the livery stable where a man might hire a nag to take his girl for a ride, if he was unfortunate enough not to own a bicycle built for two. We can almost see the stable door roll back and a flighty steed tear out of the barn with a mustached driver hanging to the lines with

(Continued on next page)

Parish J.C.'s Organized

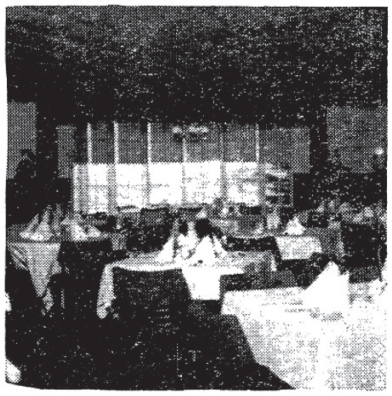
Left to right: Robert Harter, George Cusack, Thomas McAuslan, Russell House, Louis Arnowitz, Syracuse, Junior Chamber of Commerce Organizer; Robert Popp, Rev. Frank Halse, Richard Sparling.

Continued

MEXECHOES

wind will jump the price of lanterns, isn't it? Irwin's was the last place on Main street doing business as usual on Saturday night . . . pretty, too, with all the candles . . . he opened on Sunday morning so people could buy their Sunday vitties . . . Stanley's Sinclair station was the only place to get gas until the power came on . . . pumping it from Morton's truck . . . rushing business . . . Post-storm orchids have been proposed for Earl Everts for his house to house inquiry at the height of the storm Saturday night asking if everyone was all right . . . very thoughtful and neighborly . . . Coffee-and-conversation surveys have been the main topic since the big blow . . . the "Blooper rating" has the damage as number 1. Schick's on West Main, 2. Pulaski Hill, 3. Undecided.

Here it is Monday morning and the big storm is nothing but a nightmare . . . Most popular phrase was "Quite a Storm, huh?" or variations of that . . . Most people considered themselves and the whole community fortunate that no one was injured. Jim Murphy developed pictures by lantern light Saturday and Sunday nights . . . Best story of the storm was related by Jay Backus at Giovo's Monday . . . Seems the men at the Lumber company were working like mad getting roofing and material out to victims of the storms, extra trucks were going out every few minutes and the work was at a fever pitch to relieve some of the distress. Just about at the height of the work a woman came into the mill and insisted on immediate



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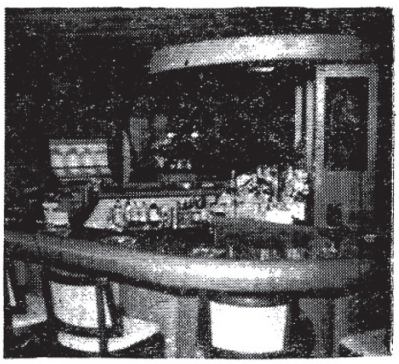

Enjoy all legal beverages in pleasant surroundings

Gracious Dining

where everything is as you like it. Nothing is overlooked here that will contribute to your pleasure in dining with us. The cuisine, the atmosphere, the service are all expressly designed to win your favor.

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Writing For The Paper

Correspondents are the lifeblood of a weekly newspaper. Their contributions each week chronicle the affairs of the area residents and give the only outlet for daily happenings in the lives of the rural residents. Mrs. Ida Tillapaugh was for many years the correspondent for the Independent from the North Mexico section. In the February 12, 1948 issue of the paper she told her story. It is a tribute to all writers who faithfully submit their items each week.

As a girl I was always interested in the home town paper, the only one in our neighborhood except perhaps now and then a copy of the Oswego Times Republican or Oswego Palladium Democrat, both of them weeklies.

I do not know what North Mexico correspondent I followed as no records were available, but at that time we were without one for perhaps a year. The first one I remember was Mrs. Jerry Dawley whose home was later the Donnell Fruit Farm, now owned by Claude Minckler and Art Martens. Mr. and Mrs. Dawley, grandparents of Mrs. Maurice Morris of Syracuse, moved to Mexico and Mrs. O. B. Mowry carried on. Miss Lena Gray then took the correspondence for some years.

I think Miss Tassie Smith, the late Mrs. Charles Hogoboom, wrote the items next, and was followed by her brother E. K. Smith, now of Chatham, N. J. I do not know why he stopped writing. Perhaps it was too much of a task for a busy farmer, when news items could not be called in by telephone and there was no R.F.D to deliver them. Without automobiles, farmers were more apt to go to town once a week than three times a day.

In the fall of 1902 I visited the Independent office for the first time to buy wedding stationary. Mr. Humphries introduced me to Mrs. Ida Baker who was setting type, and then took me to see the presses and explained the work of printing the paper.

I was married at the home of my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Warren Everts, December 16, 1902. Twenty-one relatives and friends were present.

When we returned from a short wedding trip we found the wedding had not been reported and learned later that our pastor, the Rev. Frederick A. Miller of New Haven and North Mexico, never reported events except by request.

On the death of my grandmother, Mrs. Amanda Dyke on March 1, 1903, there was still no correspondent, so Mrs. H. H. Tillaupaugh wrote the notice for us.

A third time several thought that an article--something in regard to church activities--ought to be printed in the Independent. So then I volunteered to write and take it over.

Mr. Humphries asked me to write for North Mexico, which I have done ever since, enjoying it very much when the news is all good, and always regretting my inability to say something lovely about the many people who deserve it.

Mexico Lions Club

Charter members of Mexico Lions Club: First row, left to right: Leland Druce, Pat Seaman, Harold Russ, Bob Murray, Ed Hotaling, William Irwin, Bob Cowles, Hoyt Hollister and Everet Backus.

Second row, left to right: Elmer Jencks, Robert Schickling, Rev. Donald Roth, Reginald Backus, John Hollands, John Hollister, Jack Haynes, Charles Tollerton.

Up the stairs: Rev. Robert Pennock, Bradley Joice Harold Geibel, Daniel Miller, Karl Gibbs, Dr. William Harter, John Beck, Richard Jerrett, Ted Polczak.

"Here's a little candy for the kids"

Remember when the corner storekeeper said thanks a lot when you paid your bill . . . and gave the kids a little bag of candy?

Important extras. Because *good customers* deserve the best.

The aisles are wider now. The lighting is better. Parking is easy, too. Smooth, wide lots. Food selection? . . . you can even take home a fresh lobster if you want to.

Important extras. Because *our good customers* deserve the best.

Well, we don't wear sideburns or arm bands anymore . . . but we still believe in important extras—like Top Value Stamps. Good merchandise at low prices—and Top Value Stamps, too. Your bonus for being a *good customer*.

Those free gifts you get for Top Value Stamps are a real bonus—a treat for all the family in pleasure and satisfaction.

That's why we give Top Value Stamps. That's why we hope to convince you that it's a smart idea to be a *good customer*—at our stores.

TAYLOR'S
SUPER DUPER
Central Square, N. Y.

Rippling Waters continued

all his might, and the gravel stones flying. I can see Will Fish sitting there waiting for the train to come in, enjoying a little game of cards with a few friends. In walks the preacher to hire a rig. The friends murmur, "Chuck the cards," but Will is too honest for that and invites the preacher to play. He was a Methodist preacher so probably the invitation was refused.

The dear old paper must have chuckled over the sleigh rides, and the quilting parties, the love affairs and the dejected swains.

It has encouraged civic programs, the village bands with its hoots and toots, the coming of the water system, and the building of sidewalks and the lighting of the streets. All have developed to a high state of perfectability, even the band under its constant faith and inspiration.

The Independent has always cooperated with Mexico's institutions of education. Today it offers the students of the high school the opportunity to write its fondest dreams and its deepest reflections. This is an inestimable service to the youth of the community. It has seen the school grow until it has become mostly centralized with hundreds of students gleaning the wealth of books under sympathetic teachers.

The World War brought tears to the Independent. In its pages were the sad marks inflicted by the death of Mexico boys. It recorded the tender good-bys, bravely whispered by a mother or a sweetheart as she strove to hold back the tears, while the engine half reluctantly blew the whistle which would start the train on its journey to mobilization, as if the engine knew that some of the lads would not come back.

The Independent has sung the sad funeral song as it has seen many of the most honored and able citizens of Mexico and its large vicinity pass into a world not made by hands. Still it believes in, and expects great things of the present, and the generations yet to be.

Laughing a little, weeping at times, its task is to live by the side of the road where it may serve the happy and the sad as they go marching by. Happy Birthday, say we all and many of them.

July 19, 1866:—

A friendly game of baseball was played last Saturday afternoon upon the Fair Grounds, between the "O.K." Baseball Club of Pulaski and the Club of this village. The score at the close of the game stood 55 for the "O.K.'s" to 31 for the Mexico Club.

The Universalist church is completed. The group has been using the school house. (The Universalist church is now oc-

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VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS

FROM CIVIL WAR TO THE PRESENT VETS ORGANIZE

G.A.R. First To Unite

MELZAR RICHARDS POST, NO. 367

Melzar Richards Post, Grand Army of the Republic was organized in May 18, 1883, with the aid of the commander of Post O'Brien of Oswego.

On that date thirty-five comrades were duly mustered as members of the Post and the following were installed of the Post: Commander, Maurice L. Wright; Senior Vice-commander, Newton Hall; Junior Vice-commander, W. S. Sweetland; Adj., F. B. Gregory; Surgeon, W. L. Tillapaugh; Chaplain, C. A. Booth; O.D., A. S. Mattesen; Q.M., A. N. Alford. The first commander, Maurice Wright is the father of Avery Wright, who was a prominent Oswego attorney.

Mr. Wright served as commander until 1885 when W. S. Sweetland was elected commander. George A. Penfield was next elected commander in 1886, and at the next election in 1887, E. L. Huntington, father of the late Mrs. L. D. Pulsifer, was elected. He served the Post in that capacity until 1895 when A. L. Whitney was elected for one year, after which Robert Aird served for one year. Mr. Aird was succeeded by Myron Johnson, who died while in office. In 1899 E. L. Huntington was again elected commander and served until 1903. Then Samuel Nichols, Robert Aird, E. S. Spooner, E. Baker, C. M. Everts, D. M. Barton, D. H. Austin, L. A. Whitney, William Stevens and L. Tuller were elected to the executive positions.

From the 211 membership the greater part of New Haven Post Doyle, Vermillion Post Sherman and the Post of Parish were taken.

Patriotic Service

From the date of its founding the Post flourished strongly during the generation that was to follow and performed a distinct service to this community. Widows, disabled veterans and their families were aided by actions of the veterans. Memorial Day, during the '80's and '90's enjoyed the greatest successes in the history of the Day. On that day with the aid of the Women's Relief Corps, the Post decorated all graves of those who died in battle, as well as soldiers who died after ending military service.

Oliver W. Mowry, father of Charles Mowry, was the last commander of the Melzar Richards Post, G. A. R. Mr. Mowry died in 1940, the last local veteran of the Civil War.

W.R.C Forms Ladies' Group

WOMEN'S RELIEF CORPS:

One of the really great civic organizations in the history of Mexico was the Melzar Richards Women's Relief Corps. Founded on August 19, 1889 with 13 charter members, the women of the Relief Corps took as their prime premise the declaration that "every known and deserving sufferer shall not be left wanting or in need." The Corps never once during all the years between 1889 and 1928 when it was disbanded, forgot that sacred premise.

Whenever the Corps heard of a case of sickness where help was needed, learned of a poverty stricken family, food and succor were faithfully and happily given.

So great was the esteem held for the organization that Memorial Day was declared to be The Day for it and Melzar Richards Post G.A.R. with the cooperation of the Civil War veterans, the Relief Corps planned the day, secured the speakers, decorated the graves of the honored dead, and made the day a success and tribute to the war dead.

Always the highlight of Memorial Day a generation or two ago was the public dinner given at noon by the Women's Corps. The village and community were invited. After the huge dinner, the gatherings moved on into the Town Hall to hear the speaker of the day.

It was the purpose of the Corps to aid not only veterans and their families but to be of service to the entire community. On Christmas, baskets of food and gifts for children were left at deserving homes. When a family was unable to pay its doctor bills, the Women's Corps took it upon its benevolent shoulder to see that medical aid was given without expense to the family.

First president of the Corps was Mrs. Jennie Barton, the mother of the late Henry Barton. First vice-president was Mrs. Olive Adams, the mother of the late Mrs. Almeda Barker.

Other officers were Mrs. Adelia Hardy, Mrs. Adelaide Parker, Mrs. Celia Copp, Mrs. Amelia Carp, Mrs. Philanda Aird and Mrs. Ella Ames.

At one time the Corps numbered 66 members. In 1938 the only surviving members were: Mrs. Nellie Boyd, Mrs. Edward Parker, Mrs. Fred King and Mrs. Mary Huntington. In 1961, the only survivor is Mrs. Fred (Jennie) King.

The Corps rooms were located in the quarters above what was the Naps Auto Supply store (over Ted's Gift Shop) on Main street. Here the women held their meetings. The Corps was not a social organization solely. Neither it nor the G.A.R. Post would permit public dances to be held on Memorial Day. Funds for the organization were raised by periodical suppers given by the members.

(Continued on next page)

G. A. R. Encampment 1907

The following have been identified: from left to right (1), (2), (3) Richard Aird, (4) (5) W. Stevens, (6) Orson Webb, (7) Dan Austin, (8) Elean Granger, (9) W. S. Sweetland, (10) J. Rulison, (11) E. L. Huntington, (12), (13) Green Larking, (14), (15) Dan Morton, (16) E. R. Spooner, (17) Dave Whitney (18) Len Whitney, (19) Leander Tuller.

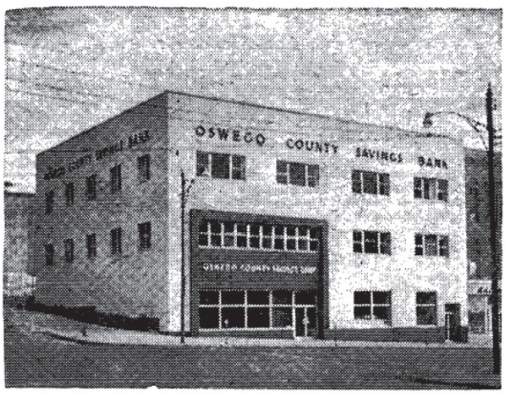
ONE OLDSTER TO ANOTHER

CONGRATULATIONS

Then

And now - - -

Our New & Modern Building



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"The bank where your money works only for you"

Stone-Davis Post Carries On From G.A.R.

AMERICAN LEGION

Mexico Post, the ancestor of the present American Legion organization, was granted its charter early in September of 1919, less than one year after the end of the World War. The Post was granted one of the first charters in New York State.

According to an item in the Independent, the charter was received for Mexico by Fred Gallagher, county organizer of the American Legion and was signed by thirty-eight veterans here.

Enthusiasm grew rapidly towards the new Post and soon more than 60 of the younger men who joined the colors from this vicinity in 1917-18, became members of the veterans' organization.

First commander of the Post was Earl Parker, elected by his comrades in 1919. The second and last commander of Mexico Post was Mattison Hollister of New Haven. He was elected in 1920 and served through the year 1921 when at the annual meeting and election of officers in January 1922, the Post voted to change the name from Mexico Post to Stone-Davis Post in memory of two of Mexico's young men who had made the supreme sacrifice. Donald Stone and William Gurley Davis.

Heywood Pettingill was the first commander of the newly named Stone-Davis Post. Oliver Henry was commander in 1938.

Most notable of all civic improvements and gifts given the village was the Mexico Community Library in 1937. The library filled a definite need in the community and was well patronized until the fire in 1938 destroyed the Legion rooms, the library and fire hall. The library was started again after the building of the new rooms but the advent of the new Central school library made its use limited.

To the Stone-Davis Post, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, on alternate years, has fallen the duty that formerly belonged to the G. A. R., that of keeping Memorial Day sacred to the memory of those who fought and died in the wars of the United States.

Each year on Decoration Day, more than 200 American flags are placed upon graves of veterans in all cemeteries in the Town of Mexico.

Following the return of World War II veterans, the Legion was enlarged, and purchased in 1944, the former home of A. W. Skinner on Scenic Avenue, where meetings are now held.

In 1945, the Legion sponsored a town baseball team and fitted up the village lot west of the village where the Minor League now is. The organization has also sponsored a boy at Boys' State, the American Legion project for citizenship held each summer at Colgate University. A top boy from the local high school is selected. This year's entrant is Richard Van Steenburgh.

The accompanying picture shows the current officers of the Post.

NAME FOR POST:

May 26, 1938:—

Donald Stone

The silent waste of blue skies above France holds forever the story of the disappearance of Donald E. Stone, one of the two young men for whom the local American Legion Post was named.

It was into the clouds above Noyon-Roye, France that Donald Stone, a member of the famous Lafayette Escadrille, engaged in battle with a number of German planes on April 21, 1918. Members of his squadron and eyewitnesses of the air battle are not certain what happened but after the attacking planes had been driven off, Stone's plane was not in formation. It was as though he had flown it straight into the sky. No official trace of the young pilot was ever found. It is believed his plane exploded in the air or he was taken prisoner after being shot down by the German planes.

Mr. Stone served in the Escadrille for a month, transferring there from the ambulance corps early in 1918. While in the ambulance service he was decorated for bravery and awarded the French Croix de Guerre for performing extraordinarily bravery under fire.

According to the military citation of the event, "He made 14 trips back and forth on a bombarded road, and under the enemy's fire, alone went to the aid of a stretcher-bearer, mortally wounded by a bursting shell."

Donald E. Stone was born in Mexico, November 8, 1891. He finished part of his high school work here before preparing for college in the Stone School at Cornwall-on-Hudson. Entering Hamilton College with the class of 1913, he made a remarkable record, was elected to membership in Phi Beta Kappa, captain of the football team, captain of the inter-collegiate debate team, editor of the college annual and weekly newspaper.

After graduating from college he accepted a business position in Chicago but remained there only a short while before returning to his home town to conduct a hardware owned by his father who had recently died.

He embarked for France on November 18, 1916, to become one of the 50,000 American young men who fell on the battlefield of France.

Further research has revealed that "the mortal remains of Sergeant Donald E. Stone rest in the Majestic Memorial to the Lafayette Escadrille to be erected in Paris."

William G. Davis

According to reports of his superior officers, William Gurley Davis, son of Mr. and Mrs. George A. Davis, was a superior soldier who performed with distinction before he died of pneumonia October 20, 1918 in a hospital at Brest, France.

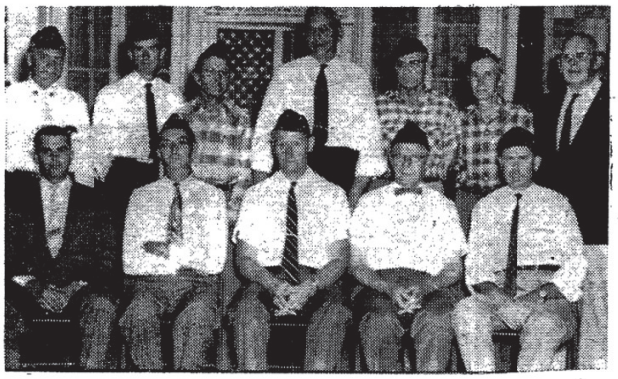
He enlisted in July 1917 in the aviation section and later transferred to Company C No. 541, Engineers Corps and went to France in September of that year, and by push and vigor attained high standing among his officers and associates.

According to a letter written to his father at the time of his death by a fellow soldier, Lieutenant Davis was "an expert at bayonet work and was appointed an instructor in that subject to a class of officers of which I was a member." His teaching showed results and on August 15, 1918 he was commissioned a first lieutenant of Engineers.

Because of strict censorship at the time of his death, the officer wrote that little information of his war activities could be given. The outfit to which Lt. Davis belonged was commanded by Captain Rice who was sent ahead in France, leaving Davis in command of the battalion. This battalion was successfully commanded by him until the day of disembarkation when Lt. Davis became sick with a slight case of grippe.

At the time Company C disembarked Lt. Davis came to the writer of the letter and said that he was feeling worse and would go to the hospital for treatment. He died in the hospital.

Legion Officers Installed



Officers of Stone-Davis Post No. 384, American Legion, were installed Thursday, July 27th by Past Oswego County Commander, Grant N. Lindsley of New Haven. Pictured left to right, seated: Raymond E. Lavoie, Jr., 3rd Vice Commander; Robert Watkins, 1st Vice Commander; Charles G. Aspinwall, Commander; William G. Hartwell, 2nd Vice Commander and John H. Castle, Adjutant.

Standing left to right: Grant N. Lindsley, installing officer; Norman J. Olmstead, Service Officer; Howard E. Fults, Finance Officer; Elmore B. Stone, Chaplain; Ernest L. Shampine, Sgt. at-Arms; Avery Dimon, Historian and Mattison W. Hollister, Trustee.

—Photo by Murphy

Memorial Set In Cemetery

SOLDIERS MONUMENT

The Soldier's Monument at the village cemetery came into existence through the action of the Soldier's Monument Association which was organized on June 20, 1887. L. H. Conklin was president, C. L. Webb, secretary, H. C. Peck, treasurer, and J. M. Hood; E. L. Huntington, LaFayette Alfred, Phineas Davis, Asa L. Sampson and Lewis Miller formed the executice committee.

In 1888 the town voted $2,000 and the monument was erected the year following at a cost of $2,689.34. The 34-foot granite shaft was dedicated July 4, 1889. Inscribed on it are the names of the veterans from the town of Mexico, including 156 members of the Melzer Richards Post, No. 367, G.A.R.

Dedicated on July 4, 1889, the monument is made of No. 1 dark Barre granite with the statue of Westerly granite, J. A. Hopkins of Oswego was the architect employed by the committee. On Aug. 15, 1888, as a result of bids, Carrick Bros. Granite Co. was awarded the contract for execution and erection of the 34 ft. high, 40 ton memorial. The total cost was $2,689.34. (George, N. Kellogg, president of Kellogg Memorials, stated that the statue on top of the plinth today would cost as much as the entire monument.)

Ladies Form Unit To Aid Legion Work

LADIES AUXILIARY

The duties and functions of the community welfare work formerly belonging to the Women's Relief Corps fell on the shoulders of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Stone-Davis Post, American Legion. Like its predecessor, the Auxiliary has proved to be a valuable service to Mexico and surrounding area.

With the Legion, the Auxiliary in 1927 helped bring to the village the charter for Mexico Community Library.

Purpose of the organization is to assist the Legion in fulfilling its duties. Members are mothers, sisters, and wives of me who have served in the country's armed forces. The treasury helps support the work for the needy, worthy community projects and funds to send gifts to disabled veterans in hospitals.

The Ladies Auxiliary was founded in the fall of 1921. First president was Mrs. Cora Badger; other officers included Georgia Richardson, Nellie Taylor, Mrs. Cora Badger, Mrs. Fannie Hollister and Mrs. Fredericka Parker.

In 1938 the affairs of the group were directed by Mrs. Bessie Shumway, Mrs. Anna Fish, Mrs. Frances Feeney, Mrs. Anna Fults, Mrs. Dena Feeney, Anna Parker, Nellie Boyd and Avis Dimon.

In 1961 the officers include: Pres., Mrs. Avis Dimon; first vice pres., Mrs. Elvena McKee; second vice president, Mrs. Nina Jencks, secretary, Mrs. Selma Henry; treasurer, Mrs. Florence Fults; historian, Mrs. Eva Pettingill. Mrs. Ida Haley had served two years as chaplain until her death last July.

Members listed on the original charter of the Auxiliary in 1921 are: Cora Badger, Nellie Boyd, Grace Boyd, Mary Boyd, Fern Boyd, Elizabeth Branch, Esther Branch, Lillian Baily, Irene Case*, Blanche Denny, Alta Edick*, Anna Fish, Amia Fults, Mae Fults, Dorothy Greenleaf, Elva Hollister, Fannie Hollister, Florence Hutt, Grace Kidd, Annia King, Gertrude Loucks, Dorothy Loucks, Evelyn Lay, Jessie Ludington, Fredericka Parker, Evalene Pettingill, Mildred Pettingill, Georgia Richardson, Louella Stewart, Josie Stewart, Nettie Stone, Grace Spaulding, Louise Smith, Nellie Taylor, Lillian White, Alice Wilder, Inez Young.

(* Members who lost a relative in World War I)

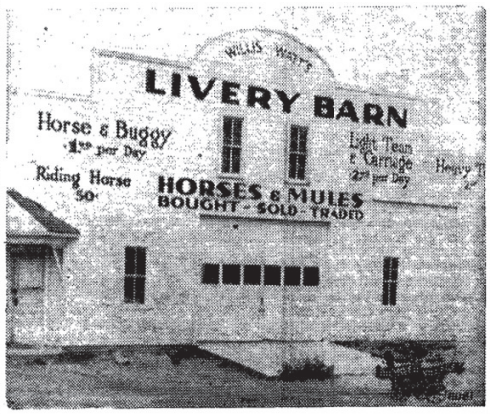
WRC Story Concluded

A will was made when the Corps disbanded giving many of its possessions to the World I organizations. So that members of the Corps who had passed away might not be forgotten, the women bought each member a bronze plaque marker to be placed on the graves of members at their deaths. These markers may be found in the Village Cemetery.

June 11, 1931:—

Earl C. Dexter received a telephone message that his sedan, which was stolen from his garage in Church street on Tuesday night of last week, had been located in Vergennes, Vermont. It had been abandoned for another car stolen from that town. A paper inside the car contained Mr. Dexter's address. He left Sunday morning for Vermont, returning home Monday night with his car.

OATS, NOT GAS



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Parish, N. Y.

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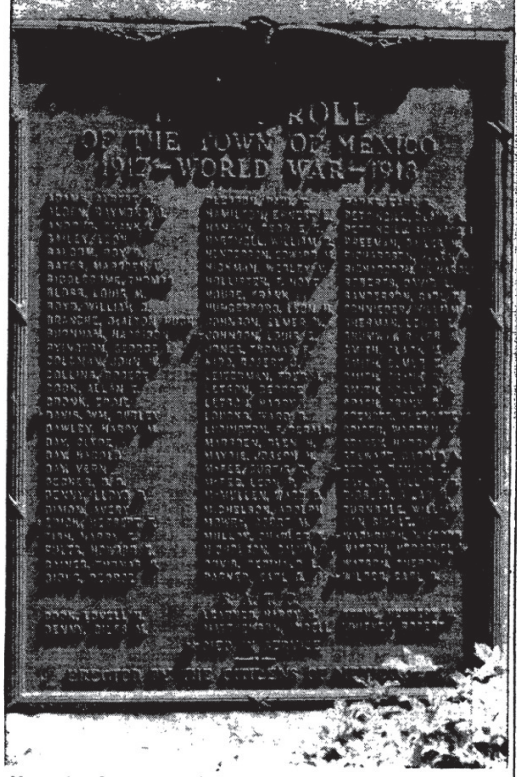


Above is plaque mounted on memorial to World War I Veterans and set on site just to the east of Black Creek on the school grounds

Honor Roll For World War I 1917 - 1918

HONOR ROLL

Adams, Albert D.
Alden, Raymond J.
Andrus, Frank L.
Bailey, Leon
Balcom, Roy R.
Bates, Marsden V.
Biddlecome, Thomas
Bloss, Louis M.
Boyd, William O.
Branch, DeAlton Hugh
Burnham, Harrison
Byington, George I.
Coleman, John W.
Collins, Robert
Cook, Allan T.
Cronk, Eddie
*Davis, Wm. Gurley
Dawley, Harry M.
Day, Clyde
Day, Harold
Day, Vern
Decker, D. D.
Denny, Lloyd P.
Dimon, Avery
*Edick, Herbert
Fish, Harry E.
Fults, Howard E.
Baines, Thomas O.
Giovo, George.
Gleason, Paul T.
Hamilton, Ernest L.
Hanson, George E.
Hartwell, William O.
Henderson, Edward M.
Hickman, Wesley V.
Hollister, F. Hoyt
House, Frank
Hungerford, Leon H.
Johnson, Elmer W.
*Johnson, Louis E.
Jones, Thomas F.
Kidd, Robert O.
Leiterman, Fred J.
Letson, George
Letson, Harry
Loucks, Ward O.
Ludington, F. Gerald
Marsden, Glen H.
Maybie, Joseph H.
McFee, Curtis R.
McFee, Leon P.
McMullen, Ward D.
Michelson, Adolph
Mowry, Court M.
Mullot, Charles R.
Nicholson, Calvin A.
Orvis, Reginald L.
Parker, Earl G.
Pettingill, Claud A.
Pettingill, Hayward E.
Preeman, Dailes H.
Richardson, Allen R.
Richardson, W. Harold
Roberts, David L.
Sanderson, Carl R.
Schnieder, William G.
Sherman, Lewis E.
Shumway, Ralph W.
Smith, Clark V.
Smith, Elmer E.
Smith, Frank O.
Smith, Holland H.
Spath, Frank G.
Spencer, Theodore C.
Spicer, Warren J.
Stacey, Harry
Stewart, Garold A.
*Stone, Donald E.
Taylor, Willard O.
Tibbles, Silas A.
Turnbole, William
Van Sickle, W. B.
*Washburn, Wilford
Watson, Herschel W.
Watson, Theron
*Wilder, Earl D.

S. A. T. C.

Cook, Lovell H.
Denny, Giles M.
Learned, Harry O.
Matthewson, Angell
Stone, Herbert W.
Whitney, Robert

***Died in Service**

—:—

ERECTED BY THE CITIZENS OF MEXICO, NEW YORK

Veterans Of Foreign Wars Form Edick-Hamlink Post

Edick-Hamlink Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars was formed in the summer of 1938.

The name was chosen to honor Herbert Edick of Mexico and Clarence Hamlink of New Haven, both of whom died overseas.

First home of the newly formed Post was the rooms long occupied by the G.A.R. over the site now occupied by Ted's Gift Shop. However, in 1945, with added members from World War II, the V.F.W. purchased the old Universalist Church, next to the Mexico Theatre.

Membership in V.F.W. is limited to those service men and women who served in the armed forces on foreign soil. The group alternates with the American Legion in arranging the annual Memorial Day celebration. They have also provided hospital equipment to private homes and sponsored youth activities.

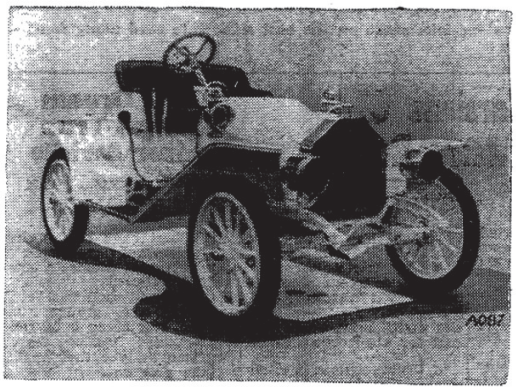
The Auxiliary functions as an aid to the parent group and conducts community activities.

28 Men Guide Stone-Davis

MEXICO AMERICAN LEGION COMMANDERS

Earl C. Parker—1919-20, 1935-36
Mattison W. Hollister—1920-21, 1949-50
Hayward E. Pettingill—1921-22
W. Harold Richardson—1922-23
Claude A. Pettingill—1923-24-25
Jesse Pond—1926-27
Robert J. Kidd—1927-28-29
James C. Feeney—1929-30
John L. Putnam—1930-31, 1943-44
Harry E. Fish—1931-32, 1952-53-54-55
Laurence M. Bateman—1932-33
Gaige E. Foote—1933-34
John Cross—1934-35
Ralph W. Shumway—1936-37-38
Edward Bickford—1938-39
Howard E. Fults—1939-40-41-42
Holland Smith—1942-43
F. Hoyt Hollister—1944-45
Elmer Jencks—1945-46
Claude Pond—1946-47
George Sachel—1947-48
Charles Tollerton—1948-49
James Humbert—1950-51-52
Floyd Tyson—1955-56-57-58
Avery C. Dimon—1958-59
Berniece Ferdyn Wasilewski—1959-60
John H. Castle—1960-61
Charles G. Aspinwall—1961-62

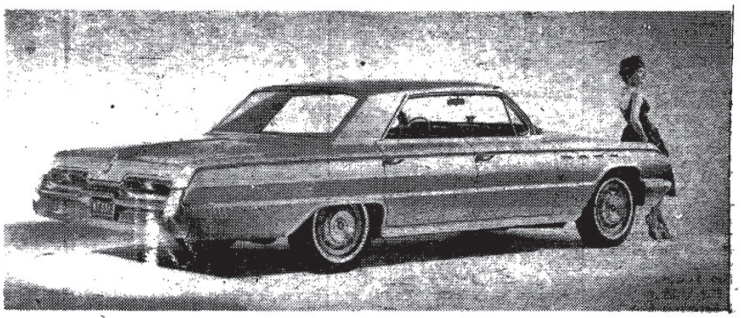
BUICK 1905



When Better Automobiles Are Built

Buick Will Build Them

Buick's New Electra 225 For 1962



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Two Views At Mexico Point

Looking across creek entrance toward the Point Club, owned by Frank Davis.

Row of cottages along lake shore on the east side. Note road along front of bulldings.

New Owner Of Paper Addresses Readers

April 9, 1931:—

In the first issue of the paper Dec. 4, 1924, after its acquisition by R. Austin Backus appeared:

Your Mexico Independent has been under the editorial pen of only two men during the nearly sixty-five years of its existence. Its readers have been very fortunate that these men were of the highest type---reflecting to their readers only those ideals which are moulded in the minds of its readers; and it is an accepted fact that these right ideals have an important part in directing the minds of all who read the paper. In picking up the reins to carry on the work that has been so ably founded by the late Henry Humphries and the late E. A. Blair, we feel that it will demand our best to continue to reflect only those principles and ideals which will make for the best.

However, there is a certain individuality possessed by all; our thoughts naturally vary and we go in a varied conception. Were it not for this, all would seek to follow the same paths of life--consequently a few changes will be made in your paper. We shall, of course, continue, in as able a manner as possible, to give you--first, the right kind of news in which you will all be interested in as inhabitants of Mexico; second, we shall keep ever before us the necessity and importance of reflecting Mexico, our town, and our home, the one spot which we have selected in which to live. We expect from time to time to give you various phases the many important features that are ours and the satisfaction which goes with them in boosting our own town.

The policies of this paper as founded will be continued with the same 'Independent' ideas, working for the welfare of all and under our motto "With Malice toward none and with charity for all."

Your support is very essential if the work of the Mexico Independent is successfully carried on. You can give your support in the way of news which you can phone, or other items of interest; report the gatherings which take place at your home, or which you attend. Let us know the facts about any project in which the reader of the Independent will be interested. We can keep our home paper in the front ranks by cooperation. We feel assured that the business men of Mexico and vicinity will continue to give us the same loyal support that they have given the paper in the past.

We are sure all the readers of the Independent will be interested to know that Mrs. Annie L. Blair will continue as a member of the Independent staff, in the capacity of Associate Editor. John W. Bower of Oswego is the new foreman of the printing department, working with George Sherman and Alvin Richardson, both of whom have for some time been members of the Independent staff.

Two Versions Of Famous Jerry Rescue

JERRY RESCUE

October 4, 1899:—

The "Jerry Rescue" started, about 1851, in Syracuse, when a group of citizens freed the fugitive slave from the custody of United States marshalls. The arrest of Jerry was a test case to see if the Fugitive Slave Law could be enforced in this state.

The federal government brought its whole power to bear in trying to catch Jerry, and every road out of Syracuse and all shipping points to Canada were patrolled and watched.

After an exciting chase out of Syracuse north, the wagon bearing Jerry lost its pursuers and finally arrived in Mexico. The story as told in the early Independent follows:

"Following the route of the 'underground railroad' Jerry was taken as far as Mexico the first night and left at the home of Orson Ames. He remained there a week; then Star Clark, Orson Ames and Solomon Peck took him to Mexico Point. It was some time before passage to Canada could be secured, as all the vessels were closely watched, but finally a British lumber skipper was induced to take Jerry on board one dark night, from a deserted part of the shore and carry him to Kingston. Here Jerry was sent to the home of Joseph George, a friend of the oppressed."

The Real Story

Following is a letter written to Henry Humphries by Edward Wheeler, who formerly lived in Mexico around Civil War times. This letter tells of some interesting facts concerning the famous "Jerry Rescue." He was a slave who escaped through the Underground Railroad and was kept hidden in a local barn for about two weeks. The letter was written in 1899.

Mr. Humphries: I have just read with much interest the article in the Independent entitled "The Jerry Rescue," and as I happened to know something of the affair I will, with your permission, give my version of it. As is stated in the article, Jerry was left at the home of Orson Ames, who then lived opposite the Academy (house now occupied by B. Olin Backus and family). Mr. Ames, being afraid that he could not safely secrete Jerry at his place took him to Deacon Asa Beebe's who then lived near where the Earl butter dish factory stands (near where Mrs. Robert Kidd lives, next to Little Salmon River). They secreted him in the barn where he was kept for about two weeks.

In the meantime, Mr. Ames, having a brother in Oswego, corresponded with him, and his brother made arrangements with the captain of a boat to take the "goods" to Canada. When the arrangements were completed, Mr. Ames notified Winsor Beebe, the son of the deacon, and he hitched up his team very early in the morning to go to Oswego for a load of wheat (they owned the mill now called Railroad Mills) and having secreted Jerry in the high box among the bags and the blankets, he started for the city, and he must have made good time, for he arrived there before daylight and delivered Jerry to the "agent," who immediately smuggled him on board the boat that was waiting. Afterwards we heard that he was safely delivered in the "land of the free."

I neglected to state that while in the barn, good mother Beebe provided the rations for Jerry, which (to avoid suspicion) Winsor carried to him in a bushel basket when he went to care for his team.

There were other fugitives who were aided in a similar manner over the Mexico branch of the "Underground R.R." and one of them might have been secreted at Mexico Point, but I am positive that Jerry was not removed from Deacon Beebe's barn until he was taken to Oswego.

I know this, because being an abolitionist, and also a son-in-law of the deacon, I had opportunities to learn some of the secrets of the "order." It was my privilege to have an interview with Jerry, and I saw the white strips on his back which were made by the whip of the cruel slave driver.

Edmund Wheeler

Chicago, Ill., Oct. 12, 1899

Park Dream Comes True After Awhile

MEXICO PARK

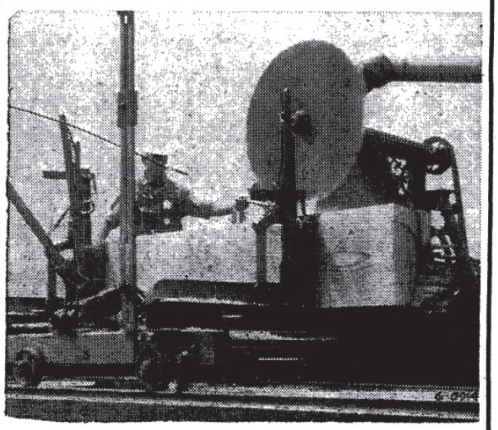
July 25, 1935:—

Plans have been under way for several days for an official opening of Mexico's new park this Thursday evening. The new band shell has been completed, the grading finished, and everything is in readiness for the Mexico Merchants' Band to take their seats upon the platform.

The new pavilion interior is of shell construction of the latest approved design for most effective acoustic properties. Through splendid cooperation on the part of many of our citizens the shell became a reality. The village is indebted to the following in particular: Mexico Lumber and Coal Company, who furnished the lumber at a very special discount, and also gave paint and five benches; to Oakes Ames who has promised several rustic benches to accomodate five persons each. Labor for at least one day each was furnished by the following carpenters: E. J. Mellen, Arden Klo, Frank I Badger, and Stanley Anderson. Claude Pettingill did the electric wiring, Arthur Ellsworth a day's painting. Paint was given by druggists Ralph Shumway and Ernest Wells.

The park is locaed in North Jefferson, opposite the fire engine hose and the residence of Justice of the Peace James Feeney and covers two lots. One was foremrly the site of a garage owned by W. E. Jordan, formerly of Mexico. R. Austin Backus bought the property a few years ago and tore down the garage. Mr. Backus recently gave the property to the village for a park. The adjoining lot is the property of Charles Giovo and Mr. Giovo has given the village a ten year lease free of charge. Also a ten foot plot in the rear of James Kessler's Meat Market is included in the deal. Mr. Kessler giving the village a ten year free lease of the land. Banker Raymond Lavoie also has a right of way between the two lots but waives his right in this respect.

Do - It - Yourself Can Be Carried Too Far - -



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WOMEN'S GROUPS AID LOCAL CAUSES

Calico Club Has Long History

Row 1: Mrs. Elizabeth Halsey, Mrs. Eva Anderson, Mrs. Irene Buck, Mrs. Hattie Sharp.
Row 2: Mrs. Ella Montclair, Mrs. Carrie Burdick, Mrs. Mary (Henry) Harris, Mrs Emily (Asa) Seaver, Mrs. Teeny Buck, Mrs. Flora (Henry) King.
Row 3: Mrs. Etta Virgil, Mrs. Mae Brown, Mrs. Alice (Grant) House, Mrs. Marcia (C. H.) Riedell Mrs. Stella (Clayton) Buck, Miss Grace Baker, Mrs. Marion (Warner) Buck.

CALICO CLUB

Wednesday, Sept. 11, 1907:—

We have a delightful Club in our neighborhood, which we have named "The Calico Club." Each lady is expected to be gowned in calico, or something common and inexpensive. Our object is to promote sociability and to become acquainted with others. We hold our meetings the second Wednesday of each month at the homes of members, beginning at one end of the street and going through that street, then take the next street in the same way. Over Twenty families are now represented in its membership. We were organized about two years since (June 1, 1906) and the society has steadily grown in numbers and in interest.

We have a short devotional exercise, then a literary program. We are to discuss current events at home and abroad and try to become familiar with other countries as well as our own America.

At our next meeting we are to describe Japan, its people, its educational facilities, etc. each one having a different subject. Also each one is to give her own method of bread-making. Each lady has the privilege of taking her work. We assist our hostess, if she desires. We also work for worthy poor, who need assistance, near by. In winter, our hostess provides a plain dinner and in summer a plain tea. (We have a rule for this.) The fee for becoming a member is "a kind and friendly word to each."

August 29, by the kind invitation of Mrs. Will Buck, the originator of the club, we met at her pleasant home for our mid-summer picnic, with some invited guests. Over sixty persons were present to do justice to the chicken pies and other appetizing viands, which were of the very best and so abundant, while Mr. Glenn Buck entertained the company with delightful music. We all had a lovely time and wished time came oftener, also wishing other rural districts would try our plan, which is so helpful and pleasant.

In the Nov. 25, 1937, issue of the Independent the folowaccount appeared.

One of Mexico's most unique social clubs is still active and meets regularly in the homes of its members, after 32 years of organization.

First organized in the summer of 1905 by the late Mrs. William Buck the Calico Club, so-called because each member was required to wear a calico dress during its meeting, became a gathering place for women of Mexico an vicinity once each week.

The club proved to be popular, soon had a total membership of thirty, and elected officers to direct the organization's growing activities.

A club song was composed by Mrs. Ward Anderson which told of the group's motto: "Always trying to lend a helping hand for those who are in trouble and cannot join our band. We'll be ready with our needle to do just all we can."

The only surviving members of the original group are Mrs. Clearwater, Mrs. Dwight Brown, Mrs. William Baker, Mrs. Grant House, and Mrs. Ernest Sharp.

Membership dues were twenty-five cents a year. Once a year the women gave a picnic dinner, which was always enjoyed, "especially by the men."

On Feb. 21, 1931, the Calico Club met at the home of Mrs. Ward Anderson, president, to re-organize in memory of the beloved ones who had passed on, and to carry on the work which they began."

The club has twenty-one members at the present time and presiding officers are: Mrs. Marjory Sischo, president; Mrs. May Brown, vice-president; Miss Maud Davis, secretary, and Mrs. Eva Oxley, treasurer.

Members of the Calico Club, as shown in a picture in the 11/25/37 issue of the Independent, in 1906 were: Mrs. Marjory Sischo, Willard Fetcha and George Buck (undoubtedly only visiting at the time the picture was taken) Mrs. Ernest Sharp, Mrs. Warner Buck, Mrs. Henry King, Mrs. Glen Anderson, Mrs. William Baker, Mrs. William Buck and Mrs. Clearwater, Mrs. Reidell, Mrs. House, Addie Baker, Mrs. Fetcha, Mrs. Harris and Grace Baker. (Taken from caption appearing beneath picture.)

This year (1961) the Club celebrated its 56th anniversary. In 1945 By-laws were adopted. For the past eight years cancer dressings have been made under the direction of Mrs. Harry Fraser. Mrs. Charles Sischo is in charge of quilt making, a project which started in 1931.

The Club contributes to all local community drives as the Cancer Fund, Heart Fund, March of Dimes, and also, the "Lotts Creek Community School" at Hazard, Ky. Care Packages, and the Mexico project, "Operation Toys."

Members, former members, and shut-ins are remembered with cards, sunshine boxes, gifts and flowers through the year as well as at Christmas time.

The present officers are: president, Miss Lona Kranz; vice-president, Mrs. Charles Sischo; secretary, Mrs. Harold Freeman; treasurer, Mrs. Myers Babcock; and the "sunshine committee" Mrs. Ishmael Dorsey, Mrs. Pearl DuBois, and Mrs. Fred Delaney. Other members are: Mrs. West Ackley, Mrs. Pearl Bombard, Mrs. George DuBois, Mrs. Herbert Cleveland, Mrs. Harry Cone, Mrs. Mae Brown, Mrs. Raymond Gibbs, Mrs. Jennie King, Mrs. Wales Halsey, Mrs. Ernest Lee, Mrs. William Haig, Mrs. Ralph Grant, and Mrs. Chester Chapman of North Rose. The number of members is kept at twenty.

PRAISE OF MEXICO:

Wednesday, April 24, 1901:—

Rev. C. E. Dorr, formerly pastor of the Methodist church of this village, in his Conference Notes to the Watertown Times says:

Mexico, April 17, 1901.—Mexico is one of the most delightful villages in northern New York. It has a population of over 1,200 and is located about midway between Oswego and Richland Junction. Its streets are broad, with cement sidewalks all through the village, and well supplied with shade trees.

The leading industries are Clark's portable steam engine works, Miller's carriage factory, Wilson's canning factory, Ames' basket factory, two flouring mills and Tiffany's planing mill. Mexico also has one of the best high schools in Oswego county. It has two banks and is well supplied with first class stores of all kinds. Its inhabitants in point of intelligence and culture are above the average on account of the classical influence of the old Mexico Academy of more than 70 years' existence.

It is also known as having been the center and hotbed of politics in all the parties of many years. There are four churches, Presbyterian, Baptist, Protestant, Episcopal and Methodist Episcopal, the last named being the seat of the present annual session of the Northern New York conference.

Women's Group — Taken August 1916

Lydia Coe, Teen Hurlbut, Retha Felt, Jennie Bradish, Rettie Loomis, Annie Gallagher, Maude Hurlbut, Lena Gardner (Mrs. Waterman's niece), Lora Jones, Emma Ely, Mrs. Dealing, Elizabeth Rainard, Anna Evale, Mrs. Waterman, Eleanor Jones, Fannie Stevenson, Kate Todd, Blance Jacobs, Mary Smith, Myrtle Priest, Mary Gallagher, Douglas Gardner, Frances Felt. Three generations are represented by Mrs. Teen Hurlbut, Mrs. Retha Felt and Frances Felt (Mrs. Fred Kellogg).

OLDEST CAR

On cylinder, 5 horse power, hand starter, belt transmission, chain drive and solid tires are some of the specifications of this 1892 BENZ, the oldest car in America still in use. Such items as the top, kerosene light ,and wooden fender shown here were then classed as accessories, and were added to the purchase price.

'Can't Replace The Horse', they said

69 Years of Progress in Automobiles, since the Benz shown above, is shown by today's modern automobile.

A Modern Service Station Is A necessity today and you will find ours well equipped to give you the finest service possible. Stop in today.

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Forty - First Birthday

Editorial Tells Of Village Improvements

Wednesday, March 21, 1901:—
THE INDEPENDENT ENTERS UPON ITS FORTY-FIRST YEAR

Forty years is quite a long time to be engaged in active business in one place. This is the length of time we have been connected with the Independent. The first number appeared March 22, 1861, so that with last week's issue the Independent reached the ripe age of forty years. What changes have taken place in this village since that time—changes in our streets, our stores and our homes. When we first came here there were no street lamps, and many and many a time, on going home from our office late at night, did we grope along the walks and every now and then fall against the fences, sustaining many a bruise. But now, thanks to our officials and other public-spirited citizens, our streets are lighted by electricity and we have a village which, for neatness and thrift, will bear comparison with any in this section. In fact, we have one of the prettiest villages in the state.

We think we may be pardoned at this time in indulging in a little of what may seem self-glorification. The Independent has been published for forty years without once failing to appear on its regular publication day. Not only has it been prompt, but we believe it has been honest. Every week, without fail, our employees have received their wages. They and we have been friends, and they have remained with us. Mr. John Berry, our foreman, has been with us nearly thirty-two years, and Mrs. Edwin Baker has been conneced with the Independent for twenty six years.

Eight editors have had their preliminary practice in our office: William Cantwell of the Covington (O.) Gazette; W. C. Stone of the Camden Advance; L. R. Muzzy, for many years editor of the Pulaski Democrat; C. H. Plumley of the Fargo (North Dakota) Forum; H. C. Rider, who edited the Deaf-Mutes' Journal for a long time; William Sainsbury, a former editor of the Central Square News; H. O. Elkins of the Steuben County Courier; and H. H. Wallace of the Phoenix Press.

It is pleasant to recall the boys and young men, now occupying responsible positions, (who were sent out for the italic pastepot,) come into our office to fill up a little time, earn an honest penny, and receive somewhat of that practical education which comes only to a printer.

Charles L. Stone, a prominent and successful lawyer in Syracuse, earned his first dollar here; and Willis Thrall of Oswego was in the office at the same time. Dr. F. H. Peck, who has a large practice as a surgeon in Utica, and Rev. C. H. Stone, who has a flourishing school for young gentlemen at Cornwall, N. Y., were in the office together; then came Will Eddy, whose successful work in the ministry was suddenly cut short by death. These were followed by Seth Severance, Henry Bennett, Fitch Eaton, Royal King, June B. Stone, Lewis Rider, George Griffin, George W. and John A. Severance, Fred E. French, the redoubtable Kirby, Will Hood, Perley Rulison, George Conyne, George Brown, Elmer Berry, Walter Allen, Sam Hawkins, (who is foreman of Hall and McChesney's large job office in Syracuse,) W. E. Heaton of Hoosic Falls (a very successful lawyer and chairman of the board of supervisors of Rensselaer county), Rev. A. D. Berry, who is pastor of the Maplewood Methodist church, N. J. George Sherman, Fred Whiting, Wallace Butts, Clayton Sampson and Ward McMullen. Miss Emma N. Beebe and Mrs. W. S. Sweetland also worked in the office quite a number of years ago.

Hon C. R. Skinner, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Prof. W. H. Slack of St. Paul, Minn., learned to set type in this office.

Some of the above who gave great promise of usefulness, have passed away, but it rejoices us to know that most of the others are occupying prominent and useful positions.

Having been engaged in the printing business for upwards of fifty years, forty of which have been spent in this village, and as we need a rest and a change, we propose visiting our boyhood home, in England once more. We are confident that none of our readers, knowing our close application and the exacting duties of a newspaper editor and proprietor, will begrudge us the intended trip. We are planning to sail on the St. Louis, of the American Line, Wednesday, June 26.

We heartly thank our patrons for their interest and support during these many years and hope, if we are spared to return, to still continue to publish the Independent for many years to come and take a lively interest in all that pertains to the best interests of our town.

GRANGE MORTGAGE

June 18, 1931:—

Mexico Grange No. 218 will hold a special meeting Saturday evening at 8 o'clock. They hold this to observe the completion of the payment of the Grange Hall in Washington street which was purchased from H. W. Cook and E. E. Hollister in 1925. The burning of the mortgage will take place at this meeting and a program is being arranged by the lecturer.

View Of Main Street About 1920

The business section east of N. Jefferson Street. Note sign indicating garage at rear.

Wednesday, March 27, 1901:—
1861-1901

On the occasion of the Fortieth Year of publication, the editor asked to be excused for his pride. The next edition carried this letter.

Yes, Brother Humphries, you may be "pardoned" and more that this, you are justly entitled to unstinted praise, for the part you have had in the prosperity, the advancement and the tasteful improvements that distinguish Mexico from the average village any where to be found in Central New York. You have steadily helped and fostered all the churches of Mexico. Who shall measure the extent of your usefulness in this line alone? Your influence has always been for the very best things. It has been said of the late ex-President Harrison that there was nothing in his record that called for apology or extenuation. This has been true of the Independent. It has been a continuous advocate of temperance, social purity, good-order and high aims. By its steady advocacy of robleness it has ennobled a life with manly virtues and worthy aspirations.

Your office has been an educator. It has given the best kind of training to many a boy who has made his mark in the world for good. It has been in fact a preparatory school of the most practical type, fitting young men for college and for life. To its influence, largely, is due the fact that Mexico has sent to higher institutions of learning, and fitted for eminent positions, more youths that are shown by the records of any similar village with which I am acquainted. This is not gush nor guesswork. It is matter of sober history. Mexico holds a unique position, of which to be justly proud.

You have advocated many an enterprise for the temporal thrift and advancement of the village and community. This is no small matter. I have noted with interest your recent effort to awaken local action in favor of making the Miller Spring wagon establishment a permanent business concern for Mexico. There are many reasons why this movement should succeed. If all were as public spirited as the Independent has been, the project would become an assured success.

Your paper has been a advocate of peace, harmony, good-will and neighborly consideration and co-operation. It has never fostered contentions nor fanned the flame of factions. In this particular its record has been wise and admirable. Surely, you may be pardoned.

It goes without saying, that newspapers do a large amount of unpaid service and bestow uncounted favors for which they get no thanks. This is true of all localities, and by this time I have no doubt that you, to use an expression once used by Rev. Thomas Weed, "have become tolerably deconciled."

Most sincerely yours,
A. P. Burgess
(a minister long associated with Prattville church)
Syracuse, March 23, 1901

Mexico Point Inn

Where Will You Spend Your Vacation?

Mexico Point is a quiet, attractive spot on Lake Ontario, three miles from Mexico Station. Carriage will meet trains.

Lawn tennis, fine bathing beach, good fishing and boats at moderate rates. Large stables, new garage with automobile supplies.

Well equipped modern hotel. Rooms with bath, adults $9 and $12 per week; children $5. Transient, $2 and $2.50 per day. Special Sunday dinners to auto parties, $1.

Season opens June 19th. Write for reservations and booklets to Albert E.

People 100 years ago would loved any one of the following Philco Appliances!

Here Now! NEW

PHILCO

COOL-CHASSIS TV

PHILCO APPLIANCES
SALES and SERVICE

★ **REFRIGERATORS**

★ **WASHERS**

Automatic and Wringer

★ **DRYERS**

★ **FREEZERS**

Philco Duo-Matic
Washer-Dryer Combination

TV PHILCO Factory-Supervised Service **REFRIG.**

PARISH FARM SUPPLY

PHILCO SALES & SERVICE

Railroad Street Parish, N. Y.

A VIEW OF MEXICO

FOLKLORE AND FACT FROM LOCAL ACCOUNTS

MEXICO FOLK LORE AND HISTORY

By: Mrs. Robert L. Brown

The following account was written by Mrs. Robert L. Brown as a result of her interest in local history and folk lore. Portions of the long account have been excerpted for use in this edition; this is not the full report.

Creek Names

Much confusion here! "They say" . . . that Little Salmon was named "Little" in deference to Big Salmon River which runs through near-by Pulask, and empties into Lake Ontario at Port Ontario. The "Salmon" part is obvious for many early records tell of that fish being caught here before dams blocked their path up the river. Long since gone!

Dewey's Corners

The first settler here was Calvin Tiffany whose cabin became the social and business center of the town, serving as an Inn, Church, School, and town meeting place. The place was eventually sold to a Mr. Dewey who built and operated a cheese factory, and thus today the present name of "Dewey's Corners" . . . Afraid he was no relation of Admiral Dewey, but it would have made a good story.

Texas, A Tall Tale?

"Spy Island" was in the center of the site originally chosen by George Scriba for his "dream city", called first Mexico City, then Mexico Harbor, and later Vera Cruz. He drew up plans in the late 1700's for a metropolis to grow here which would far outshine Oswego, and even Rochester, as we know them today. What happened to prevent such a city from developing? Probably mis-information was the main thing. Little Salmon River just didn't have what it takes to call settlers to its banks or mouth---no settlers, no city. The 'fine harbor' just wasn't much of a harbor after all. The fortunes of war (1812) scared away settlers along the lake shore, when the British took Fort Oswego. Shortly thereafter the harbor became a smuggler's paradise as it did offer a snug place for ships to rendezvous. Salt and potash were smuggled aboard and sold across the Lake in Canada. A disastrous fire in 1820 drove away most of the remaining settlers from the 'dream city' and a new hamlet grew up just south of it and was called "Texas". After all, isn't Texas north of Mexico? The settlement grew, the center of a logging, saw milling and farming area. The social and business life revolved around the all-necessary country store. One of the village's mid-nineteenth century store keepers was Loron D. Loomis. He recorded a jingle used by his great grandfather to call his eleven children each morning:

Jonathan, Odiah,
Justus, Uriah,
Plin and Josiah,
Clark and Hezekiah,
Get up and make a fire!
Hannah, Luce, and Lot,
Get up and put on the pot!

Ever Hear of Toad Hollow?

In the north west part of the village of Mexico there developed a mill settlement containing saw mills, planning mills, a sash and blind mill, shingle and heading mills, grist mills, and an animal poke factory! Some of the old stone ruins of these mills can still be seen at the foot of Academy Street, near Putnam's cider mill. Are you still wondering why it was called Toad Hollow? Why, from the sounds issuing from the surrounding streams, of course. "It is said "the Black Creek frogs sang in bass---"Orse Ames, Orse Ames," while the others answered, "Deacon Beebe, Deacon Beebe."---not to be out done, the Salmon Creek frogs chanted, "Old Golt, Old Golt," and the chorus joined in with, "Old Booth, Old Booth."---all millers of an earlier day! Toad Hollow, indeed!

Tollgate's Story

Tollgates were used at intervals on the early plank roads to provide revenue for the upkeep of the roads. The Rome-Oswego Plank Road was one such highway, constructed in 1847. The nearest tollgate was just west of Mexico Village, and gave the name to the crossroads there, now known as the "Tollgate District", Town of New Haven, when that town was formed from Mexico territory.

The following item from the Mexico Independent newspaper for April, 1862, serves to illustrate the condition of these plank roads:

"The road between this place (Mexico) and Oswego is sadly out of repair, in fact so bad is it in some places that it is quite unsafe for man or beast to travel on at night, especially when very dark. And we advise all gouty persons or those who are at all afflicted with sores, when they have to ride any distance on that road to have a conveyance with good springs and a large number of soft cushions. If they do not, their pain will be about as excruciating as that experienced by the inmates of purgatory." Apparently the tollgates did not produce too much revenue!

Colosse

This was first called Mexico Four Corners but by 1825 the many French settlers near-by had changed it to Colosse, probably to eliminate confusion with Mexico Village to the north of them. This was the crossroads where the Salt Point (Syracuse) - Watertown Road was bisected by the Rotterdam (Constantia) - Mexico Road. Colosse's most notable claim to fame is that it was the site of one of the first cheese factories in this area. It is now the last neighboring community to operate one. Have you never heard of Colosse cheese?

Red Mills

This is an old mill site on the Little Salmon River just south-east of Colosse. There were grist and saw mills there as early as 1811 and probably earlier. The name wasn't explained anywhere that I could find, but one seems justified in assuming the mills were painted red. An early recipe for mixing paint suggests that it be made from---"Venetian Red, boiled skim-milk, and a little boiled rice"---The grist mill has long ceased to be, but a saw mill still operates across the road from the original site.

Quaker Mills

At about this same time there was a grist mill, a saw mill, and a flax factory being operated between Mexico and Colosse on the Little Salmon at a settlement called Quaker Mills. It was so called because the owner was "Quaker" Alfred Wells. He never joined a Quaker Society, but believed as they did, wore the gray suit and broad brim hat, said "thee" and "thou", and behaved in general as the Quakers did. He was considered a very benevolent man, always helped the poor, spoke up for emancipation of the Negroes preached eloquently for the union of churches on a common basis. He so fervently preached and tried to convince people that narrowness and bigotry were not according to Christ's teachings, that they thought him a little "touched in the head". I guess he was merely living way ahead of his time!---Today all traces of his mills are gone. His grave and that of his wife may be found by the side of the road near his old residence. The road today is called Halliday Road, but to me Quaker Mills would be much more meaningful.

French Street

This was Mexico's only community founded by people from a single nation. The French who made their homes here, brought with them from France the knowledge and skills necessary not only for farming, but for such diverse industries as sabot-making, cabinet-making, marble-cutting, and glass-blowing. Although the little settlement is now scattered, the cemetery (St. Anne's) that contains their dead can still be visited. There one may read inscriptions written in French and find family names found in today's papers. (This year, Mexico's Beauty Queen was Miss Cheryl La Robardiere, a name known here for over a century!)

Mapleview

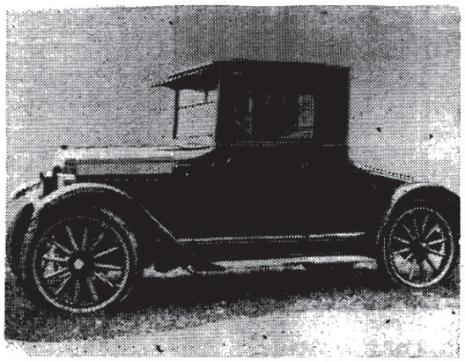
This crossroads was originally Union Square, founded in 1804, and became famous as a "way-station" on the Salt Point Watertown Road. The Inn there was a busy one . . . "One night three hundred teams stopped there and hundreds of men spent the night on the ground in the tavern yard, grouped around huge wood fires, while the night was noisy with the stamping and moving horses." What tales must have been swapped that night! (I wish I could have been there with a tape-recorder.) . . . The coming of the railroad did away with much of the traffic through Union Square. By the end of the nineteenth century the name was changed because of confusion in the mail with Union Square, New York City. Maple View was chosen, there being many maple trees along the highway there. Several years ago the old Inn was removed from its original foundations, to a spot just west of them, and now faces south instead of east. It is used as a private dwelling. The Inn's old well is said . . . "to be under the concrete at the junction of Routes 11 and 104."

(Continued on next page)

A Familiar Scene Long Ago

As one wandered down Pulaski Hill from the Eagle Tavern, he saw the watering trough (in the foreground) and the Thomas Mills (right). Ahead was the bridge and then Fraternity Hall. Lighting building on the left.

IN THE 'GOOD OLD DAYS'



The 1920 Chevrolet "coupe" shown above, had many big car advantages. It had a "gear shift" with three speeds forward and reverse. It had tires on "demountable" rims so that a spare tire could be carried inflated on a rim to be changed on the road without the necessity of patching the flat tire until convenient. Self-starters were optional. The four cylinder engine was efficient and the price was competitive. Chevrolet was here to stay.

Just as Chevrolet in 1920 had many 'big car' advantages though sold in the low-price field, Chevrolet, today is still delivering more automobile for the money. Today's Chevrolet sold by Reymore Sales & Service bears little resemblance otherwise to the one shown above.

REYMORE
SALES CHEVROLET **SERVICE**
N. Main St. Central Square, N. Y.

Little Canada

A view of Main Street looking west from the foot of Pulaski Hill. Little Canada was named from Toronto Mills.

Grafton Square

Could this be a corruption of "Grafting Square"? The name is thought to have grown out of the extensive business of tree grafting carried on by a former resident. Could one find any evidence of that today? Right now Grafton Square is only a "place" on Route 11, just south of Maple View.

Arthur

This is the site known as "The Grindstone Quarry" as early as 1820, then called "The Stone Quarry" and by 1840, "Quarryville". On 1880 its post office was listed as "Arthur", probably in honor of Chester Arthur who became Vice President of the United States in that year.

Quarryville seems much more suited as a name, for from here most of the grist mills secure their grinding stones. Several local buildings were erected from its product also. The beautiful stone residence on Main Street at the foot of Church Street, the Dible residence on West Main, the old mill at Putnam's, the tavern and schoolhouse at Arthur are among them. The old tavern and school buildings are still standing in excellent condition, though now used as private dwellings. One can still see the thick walls, deep window recesses, and impressive architecture used. They were built to last -- fortunately.

Some "Firsts" in Mexico

Apples! The first apples were raised in 1806. That first year there were only seven apples picked, just enough to give one apple to each family in town at the time. The next year the apples were shaken from the trees, and the children picked a bushel. These pioneers were their own "Johnny Appleseed", I guess, but think of the thousands of bushels produced each year now within our town's boundaries.

First Home Site --- The first cabin site was cleared just north of where the railroad tracks now lie, probably in the late 1700's. Today a remarkable cobblestone home occupies this site and is known as the "Beanery". Folk lore says its name was given to it by train crews stranded here when snow storms blocked the railroad tracks. The crews would wallow to the nearest house (the stone house just mentioned) and seek rations for the hungry passengers. Tradition has it that the usual fare offered was baked beans, thus the house is known today as the "Beanery"! (Incidentally, it's only a few rods from the very modern factory-home of Mexico's famour "Grandma' Brown's Baked Beans").

First Cemetery

First Cemetery . . Nothing is surer than "death and taxes", and the early families buried their kin on the homestead lots. By 1809 the founding fathers acquired a burying ground knownasPrimitive north-east of the village, today known as Primitive Cemetery. The markers they set tell the story of many hardships --- shipwreck, fevers, accidents, and the fearful toll of childhood diseases.

Loomis Gang

The Loomis Gang's operations were so wide spread in this area that local men organized a "Thief Detecting Society" in 1863. A few years

(Continued on next page)

Oswego County Home

On January 19, 1870 the Independent announced that a new brick building was to be built for $10,000 to replace "the old rookery long disgracing and outraging the sentiments of the humane and charitable." On Feb. 9 the contract was let for $12,500; but in the end the cost to the county was $18,202.28, the contractor being charged with selling county materials to private interests for his own profit. The farms were sold about 1940.

November 17, 1938:—

Once again the rooms used as quarters for the old Melzar Richards Post, G.A.R. will be open to war veterans.

The rooms located above Naps Supply Store on Main street are owned by Miss Fannie Thomas who has rented them to members of Edick-Hamlink Post, V.F.W. organized last summer. The new post has 35 members.

June 26, 1873:—

Spy Island: the island was donated to the Monument Association by Hiram Parker, Esq. of Texas.

January 24, 1900:—

At a meeting of the Mexico Thief Detecting Society, held at the office of W. C. Shumway, Esq., on Saturday last, it was ordered by the president that a recess be taken to April 14, 1900 at 1:30 p. m. W. S. Sweetland, Sec.

July 5, 1866:—

The brick portion of the Empire House was erected by Dr. Snell in 1851. The wooden wing in the rear was built by Judge Whitney for a dwelling about 1837. (The Empire House was near Beck's Hotel).
1873

We Did Not Come With

'The Covered Wagon'. . . .

But we ARE here today to serve our many friends.

See Us For Your

Footwear Needs

Shoes For - - -

The Young Set

Children

Men

Women

Rubbers - Boots - Galoshes

We Give S & H Green Stamps

Shaw's SHOE STORE

Shoes for Everyone

"On the Square" NO 8-6118

Central Square

Locals Seek Wealth In Gas Wells

SHOOTING THE GAS WELL
Wednesday, April 8, 1891:—

At an early hour of the afternoon of last Wednesday we convened at a safe distance to witness the shooting of the gas well on the farm of F. M. Earle in this place. "We" comprised some of the more prominent citizens of the village. Indeed, those passing thought surely a town meeting had been called. The wind blew cold and we shivered and shook for hours while we gazed in anxious expectancy for the explosion to take place; till at last we didn't know but that we were all to be grandly April Fooled. Some of the venturesome ones would run down to the well once in a while to investigate and report to the others, who were content to stay where they were, not sure that in the next moment they wouldn't "be carried to the skies" not "on flowery beds of ease."

But after we had nearly shivered all our patience away, the signs grew more portentious; the movements at the well seemed to indicate that the preparations were being completed and we knew that "something was going to drop." The "go-devil" was dropped in; the more timid ones raced up the hill as though they were "going" there too. There was a slight rumble and then mud, water and stones flew out for a minute and all was over. We felt safe to draw nigher then and examine the "relics."

Mr. O'Hara, the expert who did the business, represents the Gasterline Torpedo Co. of Bradford, Pa. The nitro-glycerine used was brought from Bradford in a wagon by Mr. Campbell who drove the distance in nine days. It was in cans containing ten quarts each, which were packed in a case, upholstered with leather and hair. This is to prevent any jar which might cause it to explode. Mr. O'Hara remarked that he had known of men being blown into atoms while handling it as he was obliged to. When cold, is is in appearance like lard and when melted is a colorless liquid.

The well is 1,800 feet deep; 1,400 feet down a vein of gas was struck and at this distance a plug was driven; water was poured in on this for about 300 feet, then two shells of tin filled with the nitro-glycerine were lowered till they rested on the plug, and two more about 80 feet high up, connected by tin tubing. Percussion caps were placed on the last one. The "go-devil," a piece of iron, was dropped in and in about 20 seconds the report was heard, and in as many more the water, pieces of rock, etc. flew out.

(Continued on next page)

1912–BECK'S HOTEL–1962

50 Years Of Service By The Beck Family

The History Of Our Hotel

Built in 1851, The Empire House catered the transient traveling public traveiing the old Rome-Oswego Road. In 1866, with adjoining stores, it was the oldest and largest block in Mexico. However, in that year, in June, it was destroyed by fire,

Following the fire, George Swanson, who had recently purchased the Hotel, bought the corner lot and erected a three story Hotel with wings on Main Street and Center Avenue (Scenic). He also built two stores east of the Hotel and over them a public hall called Swanson Hall.

The Hotel achieved its greatest fame and was known as The Hotel in town under the proprietorship of Captain David Boyd. In 1878 the Empire House was again for sale and on Jan. 11th of that year Mr. Boyd became the owner. According to the hotel register on May 1, 1879 the name was changed to Boyd House. The same register contains the names of patrons from wide areas. Many tenants came to the hotel from the South to spend their summers.

In Feb. 1898 the hotel again burned and in a remarkable construction achievement the New Boyd House was completed and entertaining guests in 70 days after the fire.

The new Boyd House passed in succession of owners, Caulkins, Conklin, Wetmore, Klett and finally to John Beck who became owner in 1912. Mr. Beck remodeled the premises and soon the hotel achieved a new fame. The mention of the name Mexico immediately brought forth the comment, "That's where Beck's Hotel is located."

Following Mr. Beck's death, the management passed to his three children, Catherine, Isabel and John, who have operated the business in keeping with its long tradition.

Beck's Hotel spans a greater number of years than the Mexico Independent and in 1962 will celebrate its 50th anniversary in the same family.

BECK'S HOTEL

"Food At Its Best"

Main St. Mexico, N. Y.

by Hastings and there resided his son, William. Whispered tales told of, "an underground hideaway in the woods back of his home and some near-by buildings had false partitions behind which horses could be hidden and transformed in appearance".

After the Loomis family were burned out of their home base in Sangerfield, the mother, Rhoda, daughter Cornelia, and the youngest son, Denio, sought refuge in Hastings. It was here that Denio bought a house in 1867, and carried on the family "business". A neighbor who lost sheep every autumn after the arrival of the Loomis family could not fail to notice many years later, and after Denio was paralized, that no more sheep were lost! Denio was locally called "Ni"---and one day he admired a horse at Union Square Tavern. 'Yes, but you can't get him, Ni!', said the owner. 'And I don't intend to try,' replied Ni.

That he tried, and succeeded, with other horses is a matter of record. Once, after being arrested for assisting two other men, he skipped his bail and disappeared. Seven days later it is reported in the Oswego Times for Feb. 27 1873, that "Denio Loomis was delivered to the sheriff in Pulaski by his bondsmen and secured in jail again." By April 10th--"the stolen horse had been recovered some time before but recently the buggy was found in Pennsylvania. The robe and some small objects are still missing. "Denio's lawyers tried to get a transfer of his case to another county, motion denied. By September 18, we read "Denio Loomis was acquitted of the charge of assisting two others in the stealing of a horse and carriage"---Loomis justice ? ? ? It worked both ways for the gang apparently for the Mexico Independent of July 1, 1874, reports --- "Alonzo Ferris has been convicted of stealing a $150 horse from Denio Loomis of Hastings and sentenced to the Onondaga Penitentiary."

The September 1, 1879, Mexico Independent tells of "Denio Loomis, having been helpless with paralysis for over two years, had another stroke about two weeks ago and is now entirely helpless." Denio died later on at the Hastings home, but all were buried at Sangerfield. The family farms were advertised to be sold at auction in 1897. Thus did Mexico play its little part in the Loomis story.

At about this same time the "Thief Detecting Society" was disbanded, also. One year they had several hundred dollars deposited with one of their own members for safe keeping, but the next year they woke up to the fact that the treasury held exactly $1.00 . . .How does that line go--something about "locking the stable doors after the horse is stolen?"

Thanks To Miss Elizabeth Simpson

My sincerest thanks go to Miss Elizabeth Simpson, Historian Emeritus, who gave freely of her time for interviews, and whose book, "Mexico, Mother of Towns", helped arouse interest in our local folklore, I'm also indebted to Mr. William Shumway, Town Clerk, for allowing access to town records.

A Looker On.

The Gas Story

Reports from neighboring communities of successful drilling led local residents to undertake the experiment. In 1890 the Mexico Natural Gas, Oil and Mineral Company was organized with F. M. Earle at its head.

In 1891 it was reported that gas was struck on the Earle farm, and it was reported that the Earle house was lighted and heated with gas for a short time.

Mrs. Thomas Jefferson Temple received he advice of spirits, as she said, and a well was drilled on her property. In 1895 some gas and a vein of oil were reported but not in paying quantities. However, in 1901 the Independent reported that pressure was rising. In May 1902, Mrs. Temple wrote to the paper: "For the benefit of the persons who say there is very little if any, gas in the well, the well has a pressure of 375 pounds to the square inch. Natural gas runs 180 cubic feet to the ounce. Multiply 180 by the number of ounces in a pound, then multiply that by 375 and you have the number of cubic feet of gas in the well. Easily figured out." Mr. and Mrs. Howard McNett, present owners of the Temple property, report that enough fuel for cooking still flows from that well.

Other wells were drilled on the fair grounds, behind the Academy, and on the Linquist lot in Cemetery (Liberty) street.

Looking at the intersection of Main and Scenic (about 1915). Note hitching post, left foreground, Dr. Ransom's office.

Between Church and S. Jefferson

View shows stores now occupied by Circle Supply, A & P, Ramsey, Sewing Box, Fred's and Corner Store.

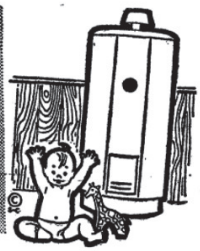
Local Press Takes Issue With State

March 21, 1861:—

Two years ago petitions were sent to our State Legislature, signed by thousands of the most influential citizens of this State, praying for an advance in price of fees for publishing legal notices. The prayer was granted; but now it seems that some miserable scallawag, anxious to gain unenviable notoriety, presents a bill in the Legislature to repeal the law, and thus reduce the present prices 33 percent, or far below living prices. For the miserable specimen of humanity who introduced the bill, we have the most supreme contempt; he would steal coppers off the eyes of his grandmother. He seems to forget that to the very printers he is trying to starve, he owes the position he now holds. Should the bill, aptly termed "An act to starve the country printers," ever come up for passage, we warn its instigator and would-be supporters to beware of the execrations of the whole fraternity, should they record their votes in its favor. The present law is right, and so let it remain.

BEST BUY in BOTTLED GAS...

IT'S THE SAFE FUEL



IT'S THE CLEAN FUEL

Mobil

MOBIL - FLAME

Bottled Gas Service

IT'S THE DEPENDABLE FUEL

IT'S THE Economical FUEL

Compare these advantages:

1. Service by Mobil-trained technicians! Saves you money, gives top performance from your appliances!
2. Sealed cylinders guarantee full measure! Mobilflame's exclusive red seal is visible proof you get your money's worth!
3. Every time you get a fresh cylinder of Mobil-flame, it's newly painted to give you an attractive installation!
4. With Mobil-flame, you always get *two* cylinders. Your reserve cylinder is handy insurance, can last you from 4 to 8 weeks!
5. Ample stock in your neighborhood. You never have to wait . . . not even one extra day . . . when you order a fresh supply of Mobil-flame.
6. We take care of your appliance needs as well as your gas needs! One place to shop, one place to rely upon for service!

ARTHUR E. BACKUS

Mobil - Flame Bottled Gas

☆ **Tappan Gas Ranges**
☆ **Maytag Washers & Dryers**
☆ **Complete Line of Frigidaire Appliances**

MOBIL-FLAME more than a gas... a Service

Pulaski Hill WO 3-7941 Mexico, N. Y.

MEXICO POINT A FAMOUS RESORT

New Inn Finest On Lake Shore

Wednesday, August 5, 1891:—

The work on the new hotel, east side, Mexico Point, is progressing rapidly. It is already an imposing structure, and when completed will be by far the finest on the lake shore. It has three stories above the basement, will be thirty feet wide by ninety long, with a mansard roof surmounting the whole. A tower eighty feet or more in height is built on the side of the hotel toward the grove. This is of Queen Anne style and it crowns the work, adding much beauty to the building. In it will be a private parlor and departments and a bandstand. The fourth and third floors of the main part are partitioned into rooms for boarders. On the second floor will be parlors, reading and billiard rooms and a large reception room sixty feet long. The dining room, kitchen and barrom are to be found in the basement. All the floors except the top one open on wide piazzas and balconies. There will be seventy or more rooms in the hotel and the dining room will accomodate about 150. Bath rooms with hot and cold water, electric bells and other equipments of a modern first class hotel are provided for. All the walls and partitions of the building are plastered. This work is done by Maltby of Pulaski. B. S. Stone and Co. did the tinning improvements, and Mr. John Wing has charge of the wood work, and under his skillful management the work is finely and rapidly done. The hotel is transformed entirely and our citizens will do well to insepect the transformation in their future excursions lakeward.

The grounds, too, are to be greatly improved. In place of the old barn, which is to be removed, will be constructed a tennis court. A new barn is being rapidly put up on the banks of the creek, and it will not, when done detract from the beauty of the grounds by any unsightliness. A wall has been built around the grove and part of the marsh is to be filled up, and the creek outside the wall to be cleared out wholly or in part. The bank is graded so that a walk from the hotel around the grove will be a pleasant feature for visitors. Tables, a pavilion, etc., are to be prepared for picnickers.

Nert year Mr. Earle expects to have a steamer run from Oswego to meet trains, from New York and other cities. If so, it will add much to the popularity of the resort.

Mr. Earle suggests that we go back to the old name, Vera Cruz, for the place instead of Mexico Point. Certainly it would be a more euphonious and pleasant name. So. hurrah, for "Twice Told" of Vera Cruz. When the improvements are completed this side, together with the loveliness of the west side, will make a summer resort destined to become more popular, of which our town may well be proud.

Mr. B. D. Randall, who is manager of the hotel, is very genial and pleasant, and takes great pains to make his guests feel "at home."

Great praise is due Mr. F. M. Earle for his push and enterprise in erecting so beautiful a structure, and we hope his venture will prove eminently successful.

October 2, 1901:—

The Mexico High School boys met and defeated an aggregation from Oswego in a game of football on Saturday, by a score of 16 to 12.

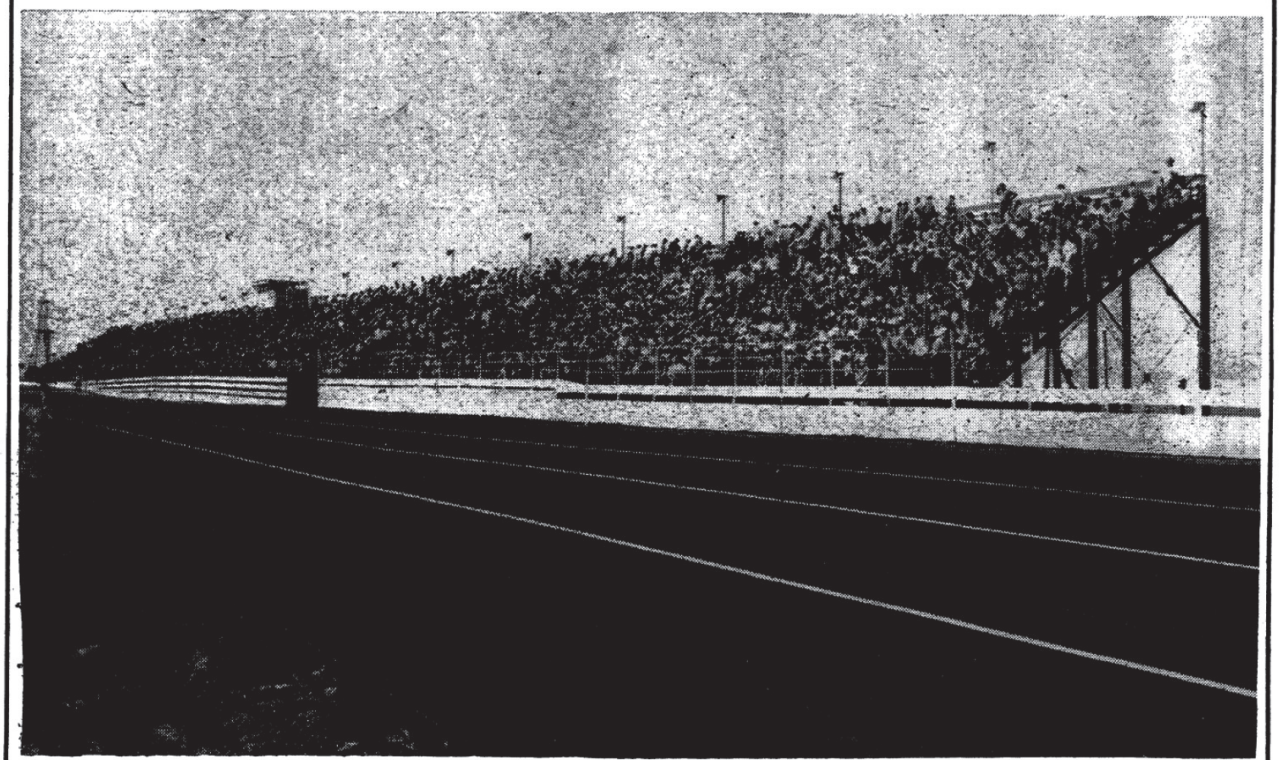
Widely Known Twice Told Inn

Completed in 1892, Twice Told Inn became the mecca for city dwellers in search of a summer vacation spot. It was the focal point for many excursions from Mexico during the '90's and early 1900's.

Cycling Proves Popular Here

Wednesday, May 4, 1892:—

The most exciting amusement at present here is bicycle riding. There are several new wheels in town and numbers are learning to manage these somewhat tricky machines. Some of our six-footers have the advantage over their shorter companions, their long legs saving them many a fall. It is good, healthy exercise and we are glad it is the fashion for ladies to ride, and hope there will be a great deal of riding during the summer.



We wish to thank you for your patronage in the past

Opening Again Memorial Day

OSWEGO SPEEDWAY

"The Fastest 5/8 Mile Paved Banked Track in the Country"

Albany Street **Oswego FI 3-1374**

Many From Wide Area

Wednesday, August 28, 1901:—

SUMMER RESORTS OF MEXICO

Mexico Point where, Salmon Creek pours its water into Lake Ontario, is destined to be one of the most popular resorts on the southern shores of that lake. Reaching a mile eastward to the mouth of Sage Creek, shaded almost to the water's edge, is a site wonderfully adapted to cottage occupation as a summer resort. Ten cottages are already there and several more we are told will be built this fall. Three times that number could have been rented this summer, had they been there. Beginning with "Woodland" owned by C. H. Everts, Loomis's just finished, Carvel Hall owned by Mr. Potter, Goodell-Johnson cottage (which has a fine view of the lake.) The Webb, and Englewood owned by Mrs. Stuart of Oswego, Prof. Fred Loomis' cottage, Mr. Rulison's, Mr. Stacy's, Mr. Wetmore's and Mr. Davis's are already there and will be occupied until the first of Sept. This resort is within four miles of Mexico, from which a stage and mail goes and returns every day. The air is pure and invigorating, reminding one of the health giving breezes that are wafted over the Adirondacks. Its effects are at once felt by the tired, weary denizen of the heated city, and recognized as similar in its effects to the air of that wilderness resort. We believe this resort can be rivaled by few if any of the resorts on the southern shores of this lake. Meat, vegetables and milk are brought there every day, and a telephone connects the resort with the village of Mexico, as well as a well kept bicycle path, while good fishing attracts the sportsman.

A Visitor

OLD FASHIONED PROGRAM

Following are excerpts taken from a program of a concert held in the "Methodist Meeting house," in Mexico in the year 1875, on the first day of January. It was set in old fashioned type and printed by Henry Humphries, at "hys printing-place, over ye shoe shop and ye Harnes Shop of Solomon Alexander and George Pruyne, on ye Mayne street, in village of Mexico."

"Any old lady whose foot stoves need fresh coals can now have them sent in from neighbor Cushman's kitchen as hys women folk will keep a fire on purpose."

The program was divided into two parts and contained "Sacred Hymnes and Tunes, and likewise worldly songs." An intermission note to the audience reads: "There wyll be a few mynute for ye singers to take breath, and the Congregation can do likewise." Footnotes follow: "All these who are so mutch blessed as to have good lungs and religious training are expected to stand up and help sing ye last hymne."

Other excerpts from the program read: "Ye polle taxe hath been fixedde at ye sums in currency of 25 cents; ye lads and lassies under 12 years of age 15 cents.

"All ye monnie wh shall be payable in for thys entertaynmente is to go for ye ragg carpets, and ye stuffedded cushion at ye meeting house. Ye big door at ye meeting house will be unbarred about sundown, when Adonizedex Sutton will strike a light, and ye Deacons Daley and Slocum wil show ye women folks good places, and ye condert will begin at 7½ o'clock.

"Ye monney can be paide at ye shoppes of E. L. Huntington and H. C. Peck, or at ye door of ye meetin house as ye do enter.

"Nathaniel Baker, ye Beadle, will be present to carry up ye nosegays to ye singers, and also to snub all undue levitie."

Wed. Nov. 2, 1898:—

On Friday afternoon Colonel Roosevelt reached our station at 1:40, accompanied by a large number of his Republican friends. A temporary platform had been erected on the west end of the station and was decorated with the Stars and Stripes. Mexico Cornet Band furnished music.

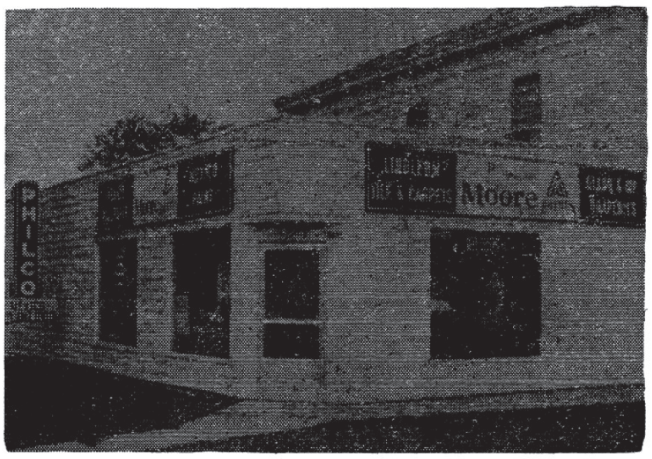
Mexico Band 1901

The organization shown above was one group of a long line of musical aggregations that provided the town with entertainment. Here they pose in front of Twice Told Inn during a local celbration.

Row 1, left to right: Warner Buck, Oliver Mowry, Ward Walton, Bert Buck, Lee Houghton, Warren Gardiner, George Burdick, Jesse Lawton.

Row 2, left to right: John Cobb, Henry Penfield, Chas. Sternberg, Will Buck, Glenn Buck, Band Leader Frank Hoose and Julious Furney.

IN 1861 IT WAS 'DO IT YOURSELF'



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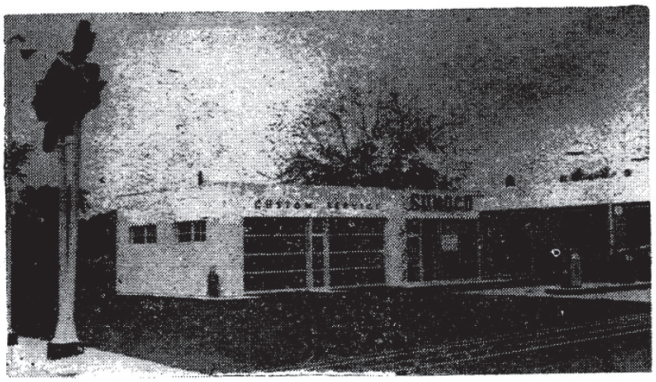
CONGRATULATIONS

MEXICO INDEPENDENT — 100th ANNIVERSARY

PARISH OIL CO., INC. 1926 – 1961 35 YEARS

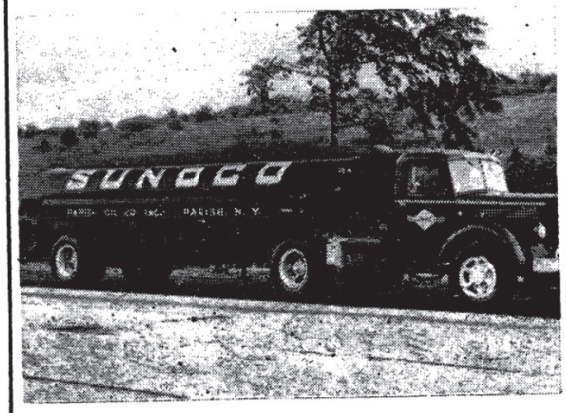
FIRST DELIVERY TANK—300 Gals.
E. H. Getman, Bookkeeper, 1926



Parish Oil's Latest Gasoline Station
Canton, N. Y. Erected in 1961

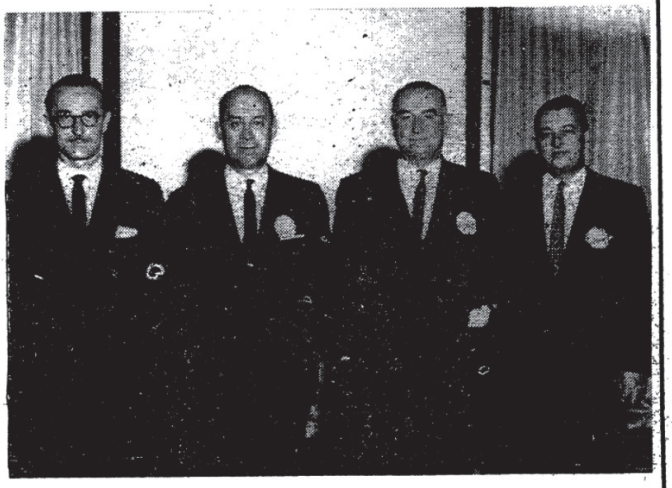
10,000 Gal. Tank Cars—Gasoline
on Parish Oil Co. R. R. Siding, Parish, N. Y.

Main Office and Employees
Main Street, Parish, New York



Modern Sunoco Delivery Truck
Capacity of 3,000 Gallons

1961 Officers, Parish Oil Co., Inc.



Left to right: W. R. Gray, Vice President; J. L. Gray, Treasurer; H. C. Fuller, President; R. C. Fuller, Vice President.

35th Anniversary

BLUE SUNOCO

PARISH OIL COMPANY

DISTRIBUTORS NORTHERN NEW YORK STATE